



EAST TROY

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committed to the Growth & Success of Each Student, Each Year

Dr. Christopher G. Hibner, District Administrator
Katherine Zwirgzdas, Administrator of Business Services
Amy Foszpanczyk, Director of Teaching & Continuous
Improvement of Student Learning
Katherine Lieske Harder, Director of Pupil Services

November 25, 2019

Dear SDBAB (School District Boundary Appeals Board):

Thank you for the opportunity to lead a 30-minute presentation on November 21, 2019, at the Palmyra-Eagle HS/MS. As the smallest school district bordering the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District, we first want to reiterate how truly saddened we are for the communities, staff, and children of Palmyra-Eagle. As stated in our presentation, we are disheartened that insufficient funding mechanisms based on outdated formulas and laws have brought us all to this point.

This letter serves to recap our presentation and to hopefully assist the SDBAB in making the difficult decisions it must make. In the end, we hope that whatever the decision, you can keep the wellbeing of the students of the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District at the forefront of your analysis and ensure all surrounding districts' organizational health will not be harmed in the short or long run.

Should the decision be to apportion a section of the PEASD to East Troy, please note the following:

- We are committed to providing transportation to the students currently of PEASD that become East Troy residents and anticipate the ability to do so using a combination of extending existing routes and adding additional routes.
- We would anticipate (a) receiving buses currently used by PEASD to cover those new routes as part of the asset transfer in dissolution, and (b) the opportunity to hire drivers currently employed by PEASD, as needed, to fill those routes.
- We currently operate our own fleet of buses and manage transportation in-house. This provides us with the flexibility to manage route changes and work with residents in any PEASD territory to develop the best transportation arrangement possible.

Please see the attached sheet, which represents the East Troy Community School District's boundaries and campus. We believe this map represents where reasonable travel times could occur. It also represents the only areas of PEASD that ETCSD could have transferred within a boundary reorganization that would not harm the immediate and long-term sustainability of our district.

The map indicates our current pupil maximum times on the bus (this is not solely travel time, but full bus time) and additional areas/students in the northwest boundary of East Troy contemplating what we view as a reasonable assignment of PEASD territory to East Troy as part of your decision. These travel times incorporate this territory related to our current transportation, geographical area of the East Troy campus, and current open enrollment students. (Please note that 32 students attend ETCSD through open enrollment from PEASD, with all but one from the Eagle area).

If dissolution were to be approved and reorganization of boundaries established, we believe the area designated in "yellow" and/or "orange" (as shared during the presentation) would be the most reasonable portion to assign to East Troy, without causing undue harm to our district, while still providing for the educational opportunities the PEASD students deserve. As noted during our discussion, many of these considerations are based on a significant amount of unknown variables at this point in time.

We also wanted to ensure clarity to the statement of "East Troy recommends that it receive a portion of the P-E territory," including which territory(ies) we believe are the only viable option(s) for our district. As commented on after a follow-up question from the SDBAB, East Troy, based on our current capacity availability (with the potential to accommodate 350 more students district-wide) would not entertain keeping any schools open in PEASD if they were within any restructuring of boundaries that involved ETCSD.

We are very proud of our small-town community and big-time education, thanks to the vast array of programming we offer toward meeting all students' needs, interests and passions. We always strive to develop rather than sort talent. In addition, we take great pride in our constant pursuit of keeping the focus on the learner and recognizing that success of a child is



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much more than scores on achievement tests. It is our goal to develop learners who develop creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and curiosity, while also ensuring achievement of content. Currently, 10 percent of our teaching staff are Nationally Board Certified; the national average is 3 percent. About 46.2 percent of our teaching staff have a master's degree, and we have school psychologists, social workers, counselors, and a school nurse available in all buildings.

Furthermore, we understand that we would participate in the distribution of the assets and assume the liabilities in a proportionate share, as represented by the equalized valuation certified in the transfer or any other methodology we understand an apportionment board may undertake. We expect this would involve recognizing the use value of the buildings while equitably distributing associated debt.

Finally, East Troy can and will accept additional students in our current school buildings. We have recently passed a capital improvements referendum to address our facilities' needs, which we believe secures our facilities for many years to come. A portion of PEASD borders East Troy and sits in relative proximity to East Troy schools, and so incorporating the portion outlined in our attached map—if dissolution and redistricting of boundaries were to occur—represents the educational welfare for Palmyra-Eagle students within those areas, while also keeping the interest of the current ETCSD in both the short and long terms.

Please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Christopher Hibner, our District Administrator, if you would like any further information from our school district.

Sincerely,

Ted Zess, Board President
Jessica Fuchs, Board Vice-President
Steve Lambrechts, Board Clerk
Bob Dignan, Board Treasurer
Tony Barrett, Board Member