

Resolution 2020-11

A Resolution by the Griffith Town Council urging the Griffith School Board to delay action on closing an elementary school

WHEREAS; the Griffith Town Council (the "Council"), as the fiscal and legislative body of the Town of Griffith, Indiana, from time-to-time encounters issues of public import and moment which invite an expression from the elected representatives as part of the public discourse on matters; and

WHEREAS; the Council, as elected representatives of the citizens of Griffith, wish to express by this resolution the will of these citizens as it concerns the closure of an elementary school by the Griffith School Board (the "Board"); and

WHEREAS; the Council has no authority in the decision-making process of the Board, as separately elected officials, or actions taken by said Board, and

WHEREAS; from time-to-time issues of great public importance may necessitate that the Council issue a public statement or opinion on a particular matter, and

WHEREAS; many citizens of the Town of Griffith have requested that the Council issue a statement regarding the recent actions taken by the Board in adopting a strategic plan that involves the closing of Ready Elementary School and subsequently placing all K-2 Griffith elementary students at Wadsworth Elementary School and all 3-5 students at Beiriger Elementary School; and

WHEREAS; the Council has reviewed the correspondence and requests from citizens conveying the following concerns and questions:

1. What is the current enrollment data? The Board has presented a declining enrollment trend but those numbers are contrary to data published by the Indiana Department of Education.
2. What publicly available data was used to implement this strategic plan and close the elementary school? There are serious concerns regarding the lack of available public information - including studies, data, home valuation impacts, community enrollment trends, – that the Board used to justify its decision.
3. Was the decision to vote on and implement the strategic plan during a global pandemic necessary? There are serious concerns regarding the timing (during COVID-19 pandemic) and process used by the Board to pass and implement the strategic plan.

4. Were all applicable laws followed pertaining to the sale or lease of real property to a charter school as required under Indiana law? There are concerns that applicable provisions set forth under IC 20-26-7-1 were not followed.
5. What is the overall financial impact to the school corporation and the Town of Griffith if the strategic plan is completed? Further fiscal analysis is needed in order to fully understand the impact on various funds maintained by the Board (Operations & Education) if the elementary school is closed. Furthermore, the Board must examine the financial impact to the school corporation when the Town of Griffith ceases to be part of Calumet Township and when existing school bond payments cease in 2022 and 2024.

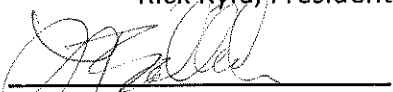
RESOLVED, by the Town Council of Griffith, Indiana that the Griffith School Board are urged to delay any action concerning the closure of Ready Elementary School in closing for at least 120 days to provide adequate time for review of the issues described above.

RESOLVED & ADOPTED, by the Town Council of the Town of Griffith, Indiana, this 12th day of May 2020 by a vote of 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

TOWN COUNCIL OF THE


TOWN OF GRIFFITH, INDIANA


Rick Ryfa, President


Larry Ballah - Vice-President


Jim Marker - Member


Melissa Robbins - Member


Tony Hobson - Member

ATTEST:


Gina Smith - Clerk-Treasurer