

RICHFIELD JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

SCHOOL BOARD

Blair Rogacki (2017)
Brian Gallitz (2017)
Chad Gartzke (2019)
Paul Propst (2019)
Dawn Sericati (2018)

RICHFIELD ELEMENTARY

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ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Tara Villalobos
District Administrator

Mrs. Susan Saric
Staff Services Principal
Mr. Jeffrey Schmidt
Student Services Principal

www.richfield.k12.wi.us

May 20, 2016

Dear Parents,

In the fall, the Richfield and Friess Lake School Districts issued a joint letter about preliminary discussions regarding consolidation. We would like to reshare parts of that letter with you, as well as provide you with an update of where we are in the process. As we noted previously:

For generations students have come to the Richfield and Friess Lake School Districts and received an excellent educational foundation. However, the educational landscape has experienced unprecedented change over the course of the last few years. We believe that each district is independently well-positioned to face the challenges and opportunities observed in education today. At the same time, we also believe it makes sense to take another look at what advantages might be obtained by consolidating. Therefore, the District Administrators and Board Presidents of the Friess Lake School District and Richfield Joint School District No. 1, met on Friday, November 6, 2015, for an exploratory discussion on restructuring. We believe that this discussion is the responsible one to have when thinking about the needs and interests of our students, parents, and community.

Leaders from both districts have held a few informal meetings to share information pertaining to fiscal operations and management. These conversations were productive. Each district believes the other has been both open and transparent, and each believes the other district is in excellent fiscal health. Discussing financial information is a necessary foundational step prior to proceeding any further in the conversation.

Through our discussions, we have further explored the potential benefits of a consolidated school district. Potential benefits include: bringing the community together around a single school district; creating a more optimal-sized district; providing shared services; and growing the current level of service to provided to students, parents, and staff.

The next step includes both districts requesting a bid for a formal financial study via an outside agency. This study would serve several purposes, but none more critical than closely estimating the tax levy in a newly formed school district. If this study were commissioned, the results would be shared with the community, and community feedback would be openly solicited. The numbers and the feedback would drive any future decision by the respective boards.

The School Boards believe they are fulfilling their leadership role by discussing the option to consolidate, and by potentially commissioning a study. Any decision to actually enter into a consolidation will only be done if it represents a majority view within the respective school communities.

In the interim, each district will continue to provide an educational experience that grows our students academically, socially and emotionally, leading to an educational experience that is rich with opportunity to develop higher level thinking, problem solving, and leadership. We appreciate your trust and support in our school districts, and will continue to keep you updated with any developments.

Yours in Education,



John Engstrom
District Administrator
Friess Lake School



Tara Villalobos
District Administrator
Richfield Joint School District No. 1



Ellen Duhamel
Board President
Friess Lake School



Blair Rogacki
Board President
Richfield Joint School District No. 1