

Executive Summary

West Virginia Department of Education Office of School Operations & Finance – School Facilities

Introduction: The Wetzel County Board of Education respectfully requests approval for the closure of Paden City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School. This closure is not contingent on any other actions and is proposed to occur at the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

Action: The Wetzel County Board of Education requests approval of the following:

- The closure of Paden City High School (Grades 7-12) and its consolidation into Magnolia High School (Grades 9-12) and New Martinsville School (Grades 7-8). This closure is not contingent on any other actions and is proposed to occur at the end of the 2024-2025 school year. In consideration of this closure, applicable West Virginia State Board of Education policies were reviewed and followed, and documents were available for public inspection for the required amount of time. A hearing was held for Paden City High School on November 15, 2024; New Martinsville School on November 14, 2024; and Magnolia High School on November 13, 2024. The Wetzel County Board of Education voted to approve these closures at their November 22, 2024 board meeting.

WETZEL COUNTY SCHOOLS

333 Foundry Street
New Martinsville, WV 26155
Telephone (304) 455-2441
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November 22, 2024

The Honorable Michele L. Blatt
Superintendent
West Virginia Department of Education
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, WV 25305-0330

Dear Superintendent Blatt:

I am writing this request for the consideration of the closure of Paden City High School (201 N. 4th Avenue, Paden City, WV) its consolidation into Magnolia High School (601 Maple Avenue, New Martinsville, WV) and New Martinsville School (20 East Benjamin Drive, New Martinsville, WV)

Wetzel County has completed all steps required for the final closure with the Wetzel County Board of Education voting in favor 4-1 on November 22, 2024 at a special meeting. All required documentation will be uploaded as required.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. If you are in need of any additional information or clarification, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cassandra R. Porter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cassandra R. Porter
Superintendent,
Wetzel County Schools

IMPACT STATEMENT AND SUPPORTING DATA
FOR THE
CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL
AND CONSOLIDATION INTO
MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Linda Fonner, President
Brian Castilow, Vice President
Jimmy Glasscock, member
Christine Mitchell, member
Christine Nice, member
Cassandra Porter, Secretary

Prepared Pursuant to

W. Va. Codes §18-5-13 and §18-5-13a and
WVBE Policies 6200 and 6204.

Wetzel County Schools
Under the direction and authority of
The West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE)

Public Hearing Dates:

November 13, 2024 Magnolia High School 6:00 PM Alternate November 14, 2024 9:00 AM
November 14, 2024 New Martinsville School 6:00 PM Alternate November 15, 2024 9:00 AM
November 15, 2024 Paden City High School 6:00 PM Alternate November 16, 2024 9:00 AM
County Board Approval Date: November 22, 2024 9:00 AM Alternate November 25, 2024 9:00
AM, Wetzel County Board of Education Office

This template (revised 12/06/23) is provided by the WVDE as a technical assistance tool for county boards to use in the preparation of their supporting documents for a proposed school closure or consolidation. This template does not reduce or eliminate the requirements found in WV State Code or WVBE Policy 6204 as they relate to school closures or consolidations. This document does not replace or supplant legal assistance provided by counsel engaged to represent the county.

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3.1. County Procedures

The Wetzel County Board of Education proposes the closure of Paden City High School and consolidation into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School. **The name, mascot and colors of Magnolia High School will change with board approval.** Paden City 7th and 8th Grade consolidates into New Martinsville School.

Scheduled Dates of Hearings:

November 13, 2024 Magnolia High School 6:00 PM Alternate November 14, 2024 9:00 AM
November 14, 2024 New Martinsville School 6:00 PM Alternate November 15, 2024 9:00 AM
November 15, 2024 Paden City High School 6:00 PM Alternate November 16, 2024 9:00 AM
County Board Approval Date: November 22, 2024 9:00 AM Alternate November 25, 2024 9:00 AM, Wetzel County Board of Education Office

County Procedures

This template shall be used to accumulate and present the data that is requested in Policy 6204 and W.Va. Code 18-5-13a to support the closure or consolidation of a WV public school.

The county shall prepare and submit an impact statement and supporting data concerning proposed school closings or consolidations to the WVBE for approval in accordance with this policy and W. Va. Code §18-5-13a. The impact statement and supporting data shall:

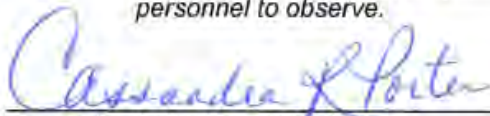
be available for public inspection in the office of the county superintendent during the 30 days preceding the date of the public hearing; and

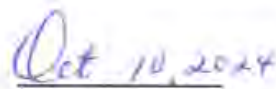
Be delivered in duplicate to the:

principal of a school that is proposed to be closed or consolidated, and of any school which the county designates to receive the students who are relocated as a result of the closure or consolidation; and

chair of the local school improvement council (LSIC) representing a school that is proposed to be closed or consolidated, and any school that the county designates to receive the students who are relocated as a result of the closure or consolidation.

A copy of the notice shall be posted at all schools, bus garages, and maintenance areas in the county in conspicuous working areas, for all professional and service personnel to observe.


Cassandra Porter, Superintendent


Date:

3.2. Executive Summary and Impact Statements

Enrollment 3.2.a. (Starting on Page 7)

Wetzel County has a current estimated population of 13,786. According to USAfacts.org, the population of Wetzel County in 2022 was 14,025, 15.2% down from the 16,537 who lived there in 2010. For comparison, the US population grew 7.7% and West Virginia's population shrank 4.3% during that period. The decline of population in Wetzel County has continued through 2024, decreasing 16.6% since 2010. The student enrollment has decreased by approximately 800 students from 2010 to 2024.

Magnolia High School serves students in grades 9-12. Paden City High School serves students in grades 7-12. Both are located in riverfront communities in Wetzel County, West Virginia. These two communities make up 2/3 of the total enrollment for Wetzel County when you include their feeder schools. This is true historically and also today. Each school has experienced a significant decline in their enrollment over the last ten years. Magnolia has always been the largest high school in Wetzel County.

PCHS had an enrollment of 127 students ten years ago in grades 9-12, a high of 130 which occurred in the 2019-20 school year, and a low of 107 students in the 2023-24 school year. MHS had an enrollment of 420 students ten years ago, which was also their highest number in the last ten years. Their lowest enrollment was 303 students in the 2023-24 school year.

After the first month of enrollment in the 2024-25 school year, there is a combined total of 382 students in grades 9-12 between both Magnolia High School (286) and Paden City High School (96) The trend highlights a significant decrease in student enrollment over the ten-year period, reflecting changes and challenges faced by the schools during these years.

Enrollment at New Martinsville School has fluctuated over the past decade but has remained well below the school's capacity of 1309 and will remain under that capacity with the consolidation of the 7th and 8th graders from Paden City (51)

Facilities 3.2.b (Starting on Page 10)

Magnolia High School offers a stronger long-term option compared to Paden City High School. Magnolia requires upgrades, HVAC improvements, and enhancements to its athletic facilities, at an estimated cost of \$16.6 million. In contrast, Paden City High School, with a smaller, constrained site and numerous safety and infrastructure issues, would need \$7.5 million in renovations but still falls short in addressing space and future growth needs. Magnolia has a mantrap for vetting the safety of visitors while Paden City does not. Magnolia's larger size and more comprehensive facilities make it the better option for meeting future educational demands. New Martinsville School offers ample capacity for the intake of 7th and 8th grade from Paden City

Finance 3.2.c. (Starting on Page 16)

The financial analysis of the proposed school closure and consolidation suggests that Wetzel County Schools will save approximately \$358,722 annually even with retaining the cost of both staffs. These savings result from reduced utility and maintenance costs at the closed school, while other operational expenses, such as personnel and transportation, remain steady or unchanged. This consolidation will help optimize resource allocation and ensure the sustainability of Magnolia High School, while addressing the financial inefficiencies associated with the closed schools. Adding 7th and 8th Graders from Paden City will not impact the finances of New Martinsville School.

Personnel 3.2.d. (Starting on Page 19)

The proposed consolidation of Magnolia and Paden City High Schools and consolidation with New Martinsville School is expected to result in no net change for either professional or service personnel. All positions currently held in all three schools will be retained in the new, consolidated school. This means that staffing levels, including administration, teachers, counselors, nurses, cooks, aides, custodians, and secretaries, will remain consistent post-consolidation providing additional opportunities and quality academics for students. Wetzel County's current configuration forces schools to teach the required classes with little if any room for core electives. Teachers are also forced to prepare for 5-7 different classes on a daily basis. Changing this workload will allow teachers to have less unique classes to prepare for and focus on preparing. The consolidated class sizes would allow for more efficient scheduling allowing room in schedules for a more diverse offering of courses. A math teacher at a smaller school might have to prepare for every math class offered at the school while a teacher at a larger school will have less to prepare for and be able to focus on less material. Any minimal reductions, such as a custodian and secretary, will occur gradually through attrition rather than immediate reductions in force, ensuring a smooth transition without impacting the overall workforce.

Student Transportation 3.2.e. (Starting on Page 22)

The proposed consolidation of Magnolia and Paden City High Schools and consolidation with New Martinsville School will result in manageable changes to student transportation times, ensuring minimal disruption for students. Although there will be slight increases in travel times for some students, such as an additional 15 minutes for Paden City students, these adjustments are within acceptable ranges. A new bus route will be established to accommodate the consolidated school. Overall, these changes aim to streamline transportation while maintaining a focus on student safety and convenience. No waivers for travel time will be necessary.

Student Educational Program 3.2.f. (Starting on Page 24)

Wetzel County Schools demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring that its educational programs meet the diverse needs of students while complying with federal, state, and local regulations. By adhering to *Policy 2419*, *Policy 2510*, and *Policy 2520*, the district ensures that all students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for future success. The consolidation of Paden City High School into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School is a strategic move that aligns with *Policy 6200* and *Policy 6204*, providing students with enhanced opportunities while ensuring compliance with the necessary standards. Through

these actions, Wetzel County Schools upholds its mission of preparing students for success in both their academic and personal lives.

Community 3.2.g (Starting on Page 26)

Paden City High School and Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School are an important part of the communities they serve, and strong relationships exist between the schools and their community. Each school serves as the focal point of the community. Each community has a strong working relationship with its school and supports the school, providing activities for its students, that students might otherwise not have available to them. Each school supports community connectedness and a sense of belonging.

The existing relationships between Paden City High School and Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and their communities would be affected by a closure in that the connection between students and the community could possibly be lost. With the closure of Paden City High School, the building might no longer be available for social gatherings and community events. With the loss of the school and these amenities, it could now be more difficult to attract families with young children to the area because most families with children like to live close to a school. This could affect the vitality of the community because some see the closing of a school as a sign of a struggling community.

With the closure of Paden City High School and the consolidation into Magnolia High School, the potential for new relationships would be developed. The communities can take what they were doing well with their schools and expand on their strengths to affect more students. New relationships with more families, a larger community, and more business members can be cultivated.

3.2.a Student Enrollment

Enrollment and Population Table

Trends in student population growth or decline in the county for the previous 10 years.

Year	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total	2748	2733	2614	2557	2531	2461	2339	2292	2253	2238

Enrollment Table 1

Trends in student population growth or decline in the attendance area of the school targeted for closure or consolidation for the previous 10 years. (PCHS; grades 9-12)

Total	127	116	115	127	128	130	127	122	125	107
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Enrollment Table 2

Trends in student population growth or decline in attendance area of the school or schools which the county designates to receive the students affected for the previous 10 years. (MHS; grades 9-12)

Year	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total	420	417	392	372	397	371	372	357	327	303

Enrollment Table 3

New Martinsville School

Year	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total	842	893	846	895	869	857	810	791	793	812

Enrollment Table 4

Population data and characteristics for the county. At a minimum, the data shall include the total population, number of births, number of deaths, and age composition of the county for the previous ten years. The requisite information shall be cited and may be obtained from local, state, and national agencies for health and statistics.

Below data was taken from DHHR and Bureau for Public Health.

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Population	16351	16422	16204	15988	15816	15640	15437	15270	15065	14904
Births	170	165	174	178	179	169	151	173	183	138
Deaths	227	223	221	218	210	196	251	235	221	236

The West Virginia Health Services Vital Statistics office only has this information up to 2020.

Enrollment Table 5

Age Composition

Year	1-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	>85
2011	2788	1872	1625	2063	2562	2434	1806	1087	346
2012	2788	1872	1625	2063	2562	2434	1806	1087	346
2013	2788	1872	1625	2063	2562	2434	1806	1087	346
2014	2788	1872	1625	2063	2562	2434	1806	1087	346
2015	2556	1847	1597	1724	2280	2364	1935	1143	370
2016	2543	1771	1601	1697	2194	2330	1983	1167	354
2017	2516	1750	1589	1646	2126	2318	1907	1197	388
2018	2510	1682	1580	1626	2043	2309	1904	1203	413
2019	2432	1688	1593	1581	1996	2275	1912	1168	420
2020	2473	1640	1595	1545	1954	2230	1895	1157	415

Enrollment Table 6

Projections of enrolment by school in the affected attendance area, for the next ten years.

Magnolia High School

Year	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34
9	81	60	67	56	52	69	71	64	98	74
10	56	81	60	67	56	52	69	71	64	98
11	83	56	81	60	67	56	52	69	71	64
12	78	83	56	81	60	67	56	52	69	71

Enrollment Table 7

Paden City High School

Year	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34
7	26	11	21	19	31	18	23	18	15	20
8	25	26	11	21	19	31	18	23	18	15
9	26	25	26	11	21	19	31	18	23	18
10	16	26	25	26	11	21	19	31	18	23
11	29	16	26	25	26	11	21	19	31	18
12	29	29	16	26	25	26	11	21	19	31

Enrollment Table 8

New Martinsville School

Year	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34
7	25	32	30	36	33	32	47	46	42	45
8	41	25	32	30	36	33	32	47	46	42

Enrollment Table 9

Enrollment Tables 8 and 9 were derived from data from the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS)

Projection Method

The projection numbers were obtained by looking at the current enrollment numbers in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) at the beginning of the 2024-25 school year for both Magnolia High School and Paden City High School, as well as their feeder schools and assuming students were promoted to the next grade level for each successive year.

3.2.b. Facilities

Descriptive Maps



Map 1



Map 2

School	Grade Config.	Enrollment Before/After Action	Utilization Before/After Action	Distance to Magnolia High School	Distance to Paden City High School	Distance to New Martinsville School
Magnolia High School	9-12	Before-286 After-382	Before-23.6% After- 31.6%	0	5.8	2.6
Paden City High School	7-12	Before-147 After -0	Before-33.4% After-0%	5.8	0	8.1
New Martinsville School	PK-8	Before-836 After-937	Before-63.8% After-71.5%	2.6	8.1	0

Facilities Table 1

Written Facility Condition Description

Magnolia High School

Evaluation of the Existing Facility

Magnolia High School consists of a multi-story building built in 1988. A portion of the previous building built in 1960 was retained as part of the construction.

Magnolia High School is a two-story building facing several challenges in meeting the objectives outlined in Phase I of the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). This evaluation incorporates an analysis of the school's goals, community needs, population and enrollment trends, and the current state of the facility.

The school suffers from inadequate program utilization, meaning the available space is not being used effectively to meet the educational needs of the students.

The building's entrance does include a mantrap for vetting visitor safety. The school operates using a water-source heat pump system, but the gymnasium is limited to heating-only air handlers, making the space uncomfortable during warmer months. The facility has a robust 277/480v 2000A electrical service, uses gas heating, and is equipped with a sprinkler system, ensuring some level of safety preparedness. Public water and sanitation services are also in place.

Paden City High School

Paden City High School consists of a multi-story building built in 1978 and a single-story multi-purpose building built in 1987.

Evaluation of the Existing Facility

The school is experiencing poor program utilization due to current enrollment, which limits the efficient use of space and resources. The office arrangement near the main entrance is also inefficient, requiring reconfiguration to improve security and accessibility. The school does not

have a mantrap for safety of vetting visitors. Additionally, the exterior exit stair is uncovered and does not comply with State Fire Code regulations, while the interior exit stair is compliant and equipped with sprinklers.

The building's HVAC system includes an air handler and roof-top unit with a central boiler and DX cooling system, but the gymnasium only has heating air handlers, restricting its use in warmer months. The electrical service operates at 120/208v and 1200A, the building is heated with gas and has access to public water and sanitation services.

Overall, the facility does not adequately meet all of the educational and safety objectives outlined in the CEFPP. Significant renovations are required to bring the school up to modern standards and ensure a safe and conducive learning environment for students.

New Martinsville School

Single story building. While most of the building was built in 1976 it retained portions of the building built in 1956 and 1958 and includes a cafeteria addition built in 1998.

Describe Existing Facility

New Martinsville School is a single-story elementary building that has undergone multiple additions over time. It utilizes various heating and cooling systems, including heat pumps, VAV boxes, a central boiler, and a central chiller. The building operates on a 277/480v 2000a electric service and is heated by gas.

Educational Programs and Related Student Services

Policy 6200 guidelines were used in the closure of Paden City High Schools and consolidation into the Magnolia High School building. The latest Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan will be used in planning any facility improvements at Magnolia High School.

A consolidated school would offer more courses and be able to offer courses with in-person teachers as opposed to the virtual options being used now. Notably the following courses: Applied Statistics, AP Computer Science, AP Pre-Calculus, Financial Algebra, Transitional Math, Chemistry, and Physics.

A consolidated school would also allow support services to be more concentrated on student needs. Social workers as well as Communities in Schools coordinators would have less ground to cover to interact with students. Countywide services (school psychologists, Special Education Support) would be able to visit more students in less places and make more efficient use of their time to support students in need.

School Enrollments, Capacities, and Utilizations

<i>School</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Building Capacity</i>	<i>Utilization %</i>
Magnolia High School (Before)	286	1208	23.6%
Paden City High School	147	437	33.4%
New Martinsville School (Before/After)	836/937	1309	63.8%/ 71.5%
Magnolia High School (After)	382	1208	31.6%

Facilities Table 2

Utilization Calculation Sheet

Magnolia High School Appendix Page 32
 Paden City High School Appendix Page 33
 New Martinsville School Appendix Page 34

Required Services and Barrier-free Environments

Comparison of the school(s) targeted for closure or consolidation and the school(s) which the county has designated to receive the students in regard to providing the required services and barrier-free environments to students with disabilities.

Policy 6200 guidelines will be used in the closure of Paden City High School and the consolidation into Magnolia and New Martinsville School. The latest Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan will be used in planning any facility improvements at Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School

The closure of Paden City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School will strictly adhere to West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Policy 6200: Handbook on Planning School Facilities, with particular attention to the sections addressing the needs of students with disabilities. This section of Policy 6200 ensures that all school facilities are fully accessible and meet the requirements set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other relevant regulations, safeguarding equal access to education for all students.

As part of the consolidation process, the district will carefully assess Magnolia High School's facilities to ensure they are fully equipped to support students with disabilities. This includes evaluating accessibility features such as ramps, elevators, and specialized classroom equipment, as well as ensuring that services like individualized education programs (IEPs) are fully integrated into the new school setting. Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School must meet or exceed the standards for accommodating students with physical, cognitive, and emotional disabilities, as outlined by Policy 6200.

Moreover, the policy emphasizes that any modifications made to accommodate the students from Paden City High School must consider the needs of students with disabilities, ensuring they have access to the full range of educational opportunities and support services. By adhering to these guidelines, the district will ensure that the consolidation not only complies with legal requirements but also fosters an inclusive environment for all students.

Grade Configurations and Educational Programs

The proposed closure of Paden City High School and consolidation into Magnolia High School presents several key benefits for the future of the school system, particularly in terms of grade configuration, educational programs, and facility requirements.

Grade Configuration

The consolidation will maintain the current grade configuration, meaning students in grades 9 through 12 will continue to be served as they are now. This ensures minimal disruption for students and families accustomed to the existing structure. The continuity of the grade configuration allows for a smoother transition, where students can adapt to the new environment without facing changes in the way their education is delivered. Consolidation will also lessen the dependence on virtual teachers.

New Martinsville School already serves students in 7th and 8th grade and can accommodate 51 additional 7th and 8th graders.

Enhanced Educational Programs

One of the most significant advantages of consolidation will be the increased variety of educational programs available to students. By combining the resources and faculty of Magnolia and Paden City High School, we can offer a more diverse and personalized curriculum. Currently teachers at both schools teach schedules with a significant number of classes to prepare for. Changing this workload will allow teachers to have less unique classes to prepare for and focus on preparing. The consolidated class sizes would allow for more efficient scheduling allowing room in schedules for a more diverse offering of courses.

This would include:

- More elective options: Students would have access to a broader range of courses in arts, sciences, and technical fields using in person teaching.
- Expanded Advanced Placement (AP) and honors classes: With a larger student population and teaching staff, the school would support more advanced-level courses, better preparing students for college and beyond.
- Specialized career and technical programs: The consolidated school would further expand partnerships with the Wetzel County Technical Education Center, enhancing vocational training and career readiness programs in areas like health sciences, engineering, and technology.
- The greater variety of academic and vocational options will provide students with more opportunities to tailor their education to their interests and career goals.
- Athletic and extra –curricular activities such as soccer and theater opportunities would be possible.

The current teaching staffs of the respective schools have to prepare to teach a significant number of different classes and cannot offer electives in the core areas. The combined staffs would have less classes to prepare for and have room in their schedules to teach core electives that currently cannot be offered.

Facility Requirements

The Magnolia High School building is well-suited to accommodate the combined student body and faculty from both schools. Its size and existing infrastructure are adequate to meet the needs of the larger population without requiring new construction or expansion.

This means:

Sufficient classroom space: The larger Magnolia facility will comfortably house the combined students, allowing for both traditional classroom settings and specialized learning environments, such as science labs, computer labs, and art studios.

Communal areas such as the gymnasium, cafeteria, and library will serve the needs of a larger student population.

In summary, the proposed consolidation will not alter the grade configuration, but it will create more opportunities for students by expanding curriculum offerings and educational programs. The Magnolia High School building provides a solid foundation for the combined school, ensuring that the facility is well-equipped to meet future needs. This plan supports the long-term vision of a stronger, more diverse, and resource-efficient educational system. The Magnolia building is of sufficient size and has adequate classrooms to accommodate the combined student populations.

Construction Work Required for the Proposed Action

County Response – No construction work is required.

The Future of Closed Facilities

Paden City High School

The Board will consider all legal options to sell or donate the building to a community organization.

School Building Authority of WV (SBA)

SBA funding is not required for this consolidation.

Closures Contingent Upon SBA Funding

This closure/consolidation is not contingent on SBA funding

SBA Facility Condition Documentation

Magnolia High School Appendix Page 44

Paden City High School Appendix Page 54

New Martinsville School Appendix Page 65

Supporting Photographs and other Documentation

Magnolia High School Appendix Page 35

Paden City High School Appendix Page 38

New Martinsville School Appendix Page 41

3.2.c. Finance

Itemization of Anticipated Cost and Savings

Closing School(s) Annual Current Cost

The current annual cost at the school(s) to be closed for:

Paden City High School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	107,038
<i>Personnel</i>	2,252,440
<i>Maintenance</i>	95,398
<i>Transportation</i>	84,312
<i>Other</i>	228,016
<i>Total</i>	2,767,204

Finance Table 1

Receiving School(s) Annual Current Cost

The current annual cost at the school(s) to be receiving for:

Magnolia High School Building

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	181,343
<i>Personnel</i>	3,897,081
<i>Maintenance</i>	371,709
<i>Transportation</i>	331,294
<i>Other</i>	508,270
<i>Total</i>	5,290,199

Finance Table 2

New Martinsville School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	239,757
<i>Personnel</i>	9,508,568
<i>Maintenance</i>	252,452
<i>Transportation</i>	1,002,031
<i>Other</i>	1,851,122
<i>Total</i>	12,853,929

Finance Table 3

Anticipated Annual Cost after Action

The anticipated annual cost at the school(s) to be receiving for:

Magnolia High School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	181,343
<i>Personnel*</i>	6,149,521
<i>Maintenance</i>	371,709
<i>Transportation</i>	415,606
<i>Other</i>	580,000
<i>Total</i>	7,698,179

Personnel item includes the cost of retaining all staff from PCHS
Finance Table 5

New Martinsville School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	239,757
<i>Personnel</i>	9,508,568
<i>Maintenance</i>	252,452
<i>Transportation</i>	1,002,031
<i>Other</i>	1,851,122
<i>Total</i>	12,853,929

Finance Table 6

Net Cost or Savings

Magnolia High School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost or Savings</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	Savings	107,038
<i>Personnel*</i>	Cost	0
<i>Maintenance</i>	Savings	95,398
<i>Transportation</i>		0
<i>Other</i>	Savings	156,286
<i>Total</i>	Savings	358,722

*Personnel figure is the cost of retaining staff at Paden City High School. Wetzel County saves roughly 358,722 with the consolidation of MHS and PCHS
Finance Table 7

New Martinsville School

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost or Savings</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	Unchanged	239,757
<i>Personnel</i>	Unchanged	9,508,568
<i>Maintenance</i>	Unchanged	252,452
<i>Transportation</i>	Unchanged	1,002,031
<i>Other</i>	Unchanged	1,851,122
<i>Total</i>	Unchanged	12,853,929

Finance Table 8

Anticipated Construction Cost to Accommodate Action

No anticipated construction costs.

County Expense Fund History

Year	Unrestricted General Current Expense Fund Balance	Approved Levy Estimate	Percentage of Approved Levy Estimate
2022-2023	19,519,799	42,876,570	45.5%
2021-2022	19,306,493	44,553,974	43.3%
2020-2021	14,720,007	45,232,861	32.5%
2019-2020	11,456,222	42,968,580	26.7%
2018-2019	9,924,048	39,277,165	25.3%

Finance Table 9

3.2.d. Personnel

Analysis of Anticipated Personnel Changes

Magnolia High School – Current School Personnel Data Chart				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
number professional personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	1	31	1.5	1
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
number service personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	1	9	5	2

Personnel Table 1

Paden City High School – Current Before Proposed Action				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
number professional personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	1	18	1	1
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
number service personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	1	1	2	1

Personnel Table 2

New Martinsville School – Current School Personnel Data Chart				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
number professional personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	3	81	2	2
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
number service personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	11	36	8	3

Personnel Table 3

Magnolia and Paden City High School Total – Before Proposed Action				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
total number of professional personnel currently employed at all affected schools;	2	49	2.5	2
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
total number of service personnel currently employed at all affected schools;	2	10	7	3

Personnel Table 4

Magnolia School Total – Anticipated After Proposed Action				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
total number of professional personnel who are anticipated to be employed at the affected school(s) upon the completion of the closure or consolidation;	2	49	2.5	2
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
total number of service personnel who are anticipated to be employed at the affected school(s) upon the completion of the closure or consolidation;	2	10	7	3

Personnel Table 5

New Martinsville School – Anticipated After Proposed Action				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
number professional personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	3	81	2	2
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
number service personnel currently employed at the affected school(s);	11	36	8	3

Personnel Table 6

New Martinsville School – Anticipated Net Change After Proposed Action				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
the anticipated net change in professional personnel due to the proposed closure or consolidation	0	0	0	0
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
the anticipated net change in service personnel due to the proposed closure or consolidation	0	0	0	0

Personnel Table 7

Magnolia High School – Attrition and Reduction in Force Summary - Professional				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
decrease that will occur through attrition	0	0	0	0
decrease that will occur through a reduction in force	0	0	0	0
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
decrease that will occur through attrition	0	0	0	0
decrease that will occur through reduction in force	0	0	0	0

Personnel Table 8

New Martinsville School – Attrition and Reduction in Force Summary				
Professional Personnel	Administration	Teachers	Counselor	Nurse
decrease that will occur through attrition	0	0	0	1
decrease that will occur through a reduction in force	0	0	0	0
Service Personnel	Cooks	Aides	Custodians	Secretary
decrease that will occur through attrition	0	0	0	0
decrease that will occur through reduction in force	0	0	0	0

Personnel Table 9

While Wetzel County Schools will follow RIF and Transfer code, it is expected that all positions will be retained through the process

3.2.e. Student Transportation

Analysis of Anticipated Transportation Time Changes

Current and Differences of Travel Times

Paden City High School

<i>Route</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Current Travel Time</i>	<i>Estimated Time after Closure or Consolidation</i>	<i>Net Increase or Decrease</i>
Bus 17-4	Paden City	33	48	+15

This is currently the only daily bus run in the Paden City area
Transportation Table 1

Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School

<i>Route</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Current Travel Time (MHS/NMS)</i>	<i>Estimated Time after Closure or Consolidation</i>	<i>Net Increase or Decrease</i>
Bus 25-8 Slim Chance	New Martinsville	22 min./32 min.	22 min./32 min.	0
Bus 25-7 Proctor	New Martinsville	45 min/38 min.	45 min/38 min.	0
Bus 21-4 Rt. 180	New Martinsville	37 min./41 min.	37 min./41 min.	0
Bus 23-2 New Martinsville	New Martinsville	N/A/23 min.	N/A/23 min.	0
Bus 17-2 Rt. 7/Fairview Ridge	New Martinsville	1 hr. 20 min. /50 min.	1 hr. 20 min. /50 min.	0
Bus 18-3 Whiteman Hill Rd	New Martinsville	16 min./32 min.	16 min./32 min.	0
Bus 17-1 St. Joseph/Coffield	New Martinsville	1 hr. /50 min.	1 hr. /50 min.	0
Bus 19-2 West New Martinsville	New Martinsville	18 min./45 min.	18 min./45 min.	0
Bus 18-2 American/Huff/Schubach	New Martinsville	27 min./44 min.	27 min./44 min.	0
Bus 15-7 Silverhill	New Martinsville	58 min./1 hr. 16 min.	58 min./1 hr. 16 min.	0
Bus 19-3 Limestone/Doolin	New Martinsville	26 min./50 min.	26 min./50 min.	0
Bus 22-2 Paden City/N.M Eastside	New Martinsville	N/A/29 min.	N/A/29 min.	0
Bus 16-1 Paden City/MHS	New Martinsville	19 min./N/A	19 min./N/A	0

Transportation Table 2

Anticipated Routes and Waiver Requests

This information shall be provided for each school that is proposed for closure or to receive students. List all anticipated bus routes after the proposed closure or consolidation with the estimated total one-way travel time for each route. Clearly identify any bus routes that exceed the recommended travel times and any routes which will require a waiver of Policy 4336.

Newly Named High School

<i>Route</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>One-way Travel Time</i>	<i>Amount Exceeding Recommended Travel Times</i>	<i>Is a Waiver of W. Va. 126CSR92, Policy 4336 Required (Yes / No)*</i>
New Route 1	Paden City	58	13	No

Transportation Table 3

No waivers will be needed.

*A waiver of WVBE Policy 4336 is only required for elementary school routes that have a one-way transportation time greater than 45 minutes.

Travel Time to Neighboring County Public School

School	Neighboring School /County	Distance	Route	Travel Time
Magnolia High School	Tyler Consolidated High School (Tyler County)	11.6	WV2/WV 180	18 Minutes
Magnolia High School	St. Mary's High School (Pleasants County)	24.8	WV 2	34 Minutes
Magnolia High School	John Marshall High School (Marshall County)	27.3	WV 2	40 Minutes
Magnolia High School	River High School (OH)	3	WV 2/OH 7	8 Minutes
Paden City High School	Tyler Consolidated High School (Tyler County)	13.4	WV2/WV 180	18 Minutes
Paden City High School	St. Mary's High School (Pleasants County)	19	WV 2	25 Minutes
Paden City High School	John Marshall High School (Marshall County)	32.8	WV 2	48 Minutes
Paden City High School	River High School (OH)	8.4	WV 2/OH 7	15 Minutes
New Martinsville School	Tyler Consolidated High School (Tyler County)	13.8	WV 2/WV 180	23 Minutes
New Martinsville School	River High School (OH)	3.9	WV 2/OH 7	8 Minutes
New Martinsville School	Pleasants County Middle School (Pleasants County)	34.5	WV 2	45 Minutes
New Martinsville School	Moundsville Middle School (Marshall County)	23.4	WV 2	29 Minutes

Transportation Table 4

All times and routes taken directly from Google Maps

3.2.f. Student Educational Program

Analysis and Assurance of Consideration

Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

Mission and Vision

Wetzel County Schools is dedicated to fostering an engaging educational environment centered on teaching and learning, with a mission to provide all students with a quality education that prepares them for success. The district's vision, developed in partnership with families, focuses on cultivating students who will become productive, knowledgeable, responsible, and caring citizens, actively engaged in their communities. The district emphasizes the importance of rigorous learning to help students develop strong communication and collaboration skills, along with proficiency in literacy and mathematics, across all curricular offerings. This approach aligns with *W. Va. 126CSR42, Policy 2510: Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs*, which sets the framework for ensuring that all educational programs meet state standards and provide a comprehensive curriculum for student success.

Compliance with Educational Standards

Wetzel County Schools addresses not only the academic but also the social, emotional, and technological needs of students, aiming to meet their diverse learning requirements through a system of curriculum and instruction structured to comply with *W. Va. 126CSR16, Policy 2419: Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities*. This policy outlines the necessary provisions to ensure that students with exceptionalities receive a free and appropriate public education, in alignment with federal and state regulations. The district is committed to providing equitable opportunities for all students by adhering to both *Policy 2419* and *W. Va. 126CSR44 et al., Policy 2520: Content Standards and Objectives for West Virginia Schools*, ensuring that students meet all state academic standards across various subjects.

Consolidation of Paden City High School and Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School

The decision to close Paden City High School and consolidate its students with Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School is a strategic move aimed at expanding educational opportunities for all students, which supports the district's mission of providing equitable access to a rigorous curriculum. Due to the smaller enrollment, students do not have access to the same range of courses and extracurricular activities as students at larger schools. By consolidating students will benefit from an expanded curriculum and broader opportunities, aligning with the standards set forth in *W. Va. 126CSR42, Policy 2510*.

Additionally, the consolidation process complies with *W. Va. 126CSR172, Policy 6200: Handbook on Planning School Facilities*, which provides guidance on ensuring that school facilities support educational programming effectively. The closure of Paden City High School and the consolidation plan follow *Policy 6204: School Closings or Consolidations*, ensuring that the decision aligns with both state regulations and community needs.

Impact on New Martinsville School

The intake of 7th and 8th graders into New Martinsville School has been carefully considered to avoid any negative impact on the curriculum. This decision complies with *W. Va. 126CSR42, Policy 2510*, which ensures that schools provide a comprehensive and quality curriculum across all grade levels. The district's ability to accommodate additional students without compromising educational quality reflects careful planning in accordance with state regulations, ensuring that the school's facilities and resources are appropriately allocated.

Conclusion

Wetzel County Schools demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring that its educational programs meet the diverse needs of students while complying with federal, state, and local regulations. By adhering to *Policy 2419*, *Policy 2510*, and *Policy 2520*, the district ensures that all students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for future success. The consolidation of Paden City High School into Magnolia High School is a strategic move that aligns with *Policy 6200* and *Policy 6204*, providing students with enhanced opportunities while ensuring compliance with the necessary standards. Through these actions, Wetzel County Schools upholds its mission of preparing students for success in both their academic and personal lives.

In the preparation of the documents regarding the closure and/or consolidation of the above referenced school, the following codes and policies have been considered:

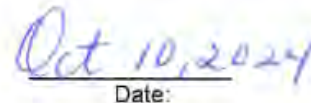
Please check each item that was considered.

- W. Va. 126CSR16, Policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities,*
- W. Va. 126CSR42, Policy 2510, Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs,*
- W. Va. 126CSR44 et al., Policy 2520, Content Standards and Objectives for West Virginia Schools,*
- W. Va. 126CSR172 Policy 6200- Handbook on Planning School Facilities,*
- Policy 6204-School Closings or Consolidations*

Signature of the County Superintendent assuring consideration of the above codes and policies.



Superintendent



Date:

3.2.g. Community

1. The known relationships that exist between the affected schools and their communities.

Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School share a close relationship, with students from each school frequently crossing attendance boundaries to attend the other. This collaborative spirit extends beyond academics, as students from both schools regularly come together for joint theater productions, showcasing their talents on a shared stage. Athletic teams from both schools share bussing when necessary. For example, Cross Country and Track. Additionally, many students from both Magnolia and Paden City High Schools already attend the Wetzel County Technical Education Center together, fostering connections and learning experiences in specialized fields.

Geographically, the two schools are only 5.8 miles apart, a short 10-minute drive along WV Route 2. This proximity encourages a strong sense of community between the residents of Paden City and New Martinsville. Paden City residents often travel to New Martinsville for business, shopping, and legal matters, further blending the daily lives of these neighboring communities.

New Martinsville School is also in New Martinsville and only 3 miles further north on WV 2 than Magnolia High School is from Paden City High School. Several students from Paden City already attend New Martinsville School and are part of the community.

2. How the existing known relationships would be impacted by the proposed action.

A school consolidation between Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School would bring numerous positive changes for students and their communities. Students already familiar with collaborating on theater productions and attending the Wetzel County Technical Education Center together would benefit from even more integrated experiences, fostering stronger bonds and creating a larger, more vibrant student community.

The schools' close proximity—just 5.8 miles apart along WV Route 2 for PCHS and MHS and just 8.1 miles apart for PCHS and NMS, makes the transition more convenient, helping to ease any potential logistical concerns. Families from both Paden City and New Martinsville, who already interact frequently for business, shopping, and legal matters, would find even more opportunities for collaboration and connection, further strengthening the ties between the two communities.

Consolidation would allow students to benefit from a greater pool of resources, including more diverse extracurriculars and advanced educational programs. A larger teaching staff would allow teachers to have less preps and offer more classes than the separate faculties currently can. This will also lessen the need for virtual teachers.

This new chapter would honor the histories of both Magnolia and Paden City while opening doors to a shared future.

3. The potential for new relationships that would be developed under the proposed action.

A consolidation between Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School would introduce several new positive benefits for students, staff, and the broader community:

1. Expanded Academic Opportunities

With more resources pooled together, the consolidated school would offer a wider variety of advanced courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) classes, honors programs, and specialized electives. This would better prepare students for college and careers, giving them more choices and pathways to success.

2. Enhanced Extracurricular Programs

A larger student body would allow for more robust extracurricular programs, including expanded athletic teams, academic clubs, and arts programs. Students would participate in new activities, and programs like theater productions, which are already collaborative, would grow in scale and quality.

3. Increased Social Connections:

The merging of two school communities would give students the chance to form new friendships and social connections. This larger, more diverse student body would lead to a richer, more inclusive social experience, allowing students to interact with a wider range of peers.

4. Stronger Community Ties:

Bringing together two closely connected communities would foster a stronger sense of unity and shared purpose. Paden City and New Martinsville residents already have many common touchpoints, and a consolidated school would further strengthen these relationships, encouraging community events and collaborations.

5. Greater School Spirit:

A unified school would create a larger, more energized student body that rallies around shared sports teams, academic achievements, and community events. This new school identity would inspire a sense of pride, fostering a culture of school spirit and tradition that blends the best of both former schools.

In summary, consolidation would bring new academic, social, and financial opportunities, enhancing the overall high school experience while uniting the two communities in a positive and forward-looking way.

3.3. & 3.4. Public Notices and Hearings

Notice of Public Hearing(s)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Wetzel County Board of Education will hold three public hearings on the Superintendent's recommendation to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, as follows:

- LOCATION: Magnolia High School, 601 Maple Avenue, New Martinsville, WV
DATE AND TIME: November 13, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- LOCATION: New Martinsville School, 20 East Benjamin Drive, New Martinsville, WV
DATE AND TIME: November 14, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- LOCATION: Paden City High School, 201 North Fourth Avenue, Paden City, WV
DATE AND TIME: November 15, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

If, at the time a hearing is called to order, the Board determines that the location is of insufficient size to accommodate all who desire to attend, the hearing will be recessed and moved to a new location of sufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend. If that happens, the new meeting location will be posted at the original meeting location.

If a public hearing is not completed by 11 p.m., it will be recessed, to be continued on a date and at a time designated and announced by the Board just prior to the hearing recess, to be continued day-to-day until concluded. The public hearings, as well as any reconvened session of the public hearings, shall end at the conclusion of each hearing's business or at 11 p.m., whichever occurs earlier.

ALTERNATE DATES AND TIMES

If, due to inclement weather or other cause, any hearing cannot be held on the scheduled date, the hearing or meeting will be held at the same location as originally scheduled, but on these dates and times:

- for the hearing at Magnolia High School, on November 14, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.
- for the hearing at New Martinsville School, on November 15, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.
- for the hearing at Paden City High School, on November 16, 2024, beginning at 1 p.m.

If for any reason a hearing(s) cannot be conducted on the alternate date or time, the Board will determine a date or time.

HEARING PROCEDURES

For a period of 30 minutes prior to the commencement of a public hearing, persons may and are encouraged to register at the hearing location for the purpose of making statements, offering

testimony, and questioning school officials concerning the proposals. Each hearing will begin with an oral summary by a representative of Wetzel County Schools of the reasons and supporting data in connection with the proposed action by the Board. Speakers will then be recognized in the order in which they registered.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

The Board will consider any written material submitted by members of the public concerning the proposals if the material, with 6 copies, is submitted to and received by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, before 12:00 p.m. on November 7, 2024, including any findings and recommendations from the local school improvement councils representing Magnolia High School and Paden City High School.

REASONS AND SUPPORTING DATA

Until the date of the first hearing, written reasons for the Superintendent's recommendations in the form of an Impact Statement and Supporting Data are available for public inspection in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on week days between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

FINAL ACTION

The Board of Education will take formal action on the Superintendent's proposal to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School, at its meeting at the Board of Education Office, 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on November 22, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. If, due to inclement weather or other cause, the Board meeting cannot be held on the scheduled date, the meeting will be held at the same location and time as originally scheduled, but on November 25, 2024.

Cassandra R. Porter,
Superintendent
Wetzel County Board of Education

First Run: October 23, 2024
Second Run: October 30, 2024
Third Run: November 6, 2024

Proof of Public Hearing(s) Notice
To be added after published

Public Hearing(s) Documentation and Formal Vote on the Closure(s) or Consolidation(s)
To be added after action

3.6. County Board Actions

County Board Vote(s)
To be included after action is taken

Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP)
The Wetzel County Board of Education will request an amendment to CEFP as required.

School Building Authority of WV
Not contingent on SBA funding.

Closures Contingent Upon SBA Funding
Not dependent on SBA funding.

3.6. Superintendent Verification of Board Actions

To be inserted after action is taken

Appendix of Supporting Data

SBA Usage Report Magnolia High School	32
SBA Usage Report Paden City High School	33
SBA Usage Report New Martinsville School	34
Magnolia High School Photographs	35-37
Paden City High School Photographs	38-40
New Martinsville School Photographs	41-43
SBA Facilities Report Magnolia High School	44-53
SBA Facilities Report Paden City High School	54-64
SBA Facilities Report New Martinsville School	65-74
Most Recent Certified October 1 Enrollment	75

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility Spaces Evaluation / Utilization Analysis Sheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	43798
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988

Individual School Utilization Analysis								
	Grade Config	Age of Facility	No. of Renovations	Square Ft	Portables	Location (City, St)		
Lowest Grade Level:	9	9 - 12		116,800	0	New Martinsville, WV		
Highest Grade Level:	12							
Complete ONLY the column below associated with the highest grade level for this school.								
Classroom Type	Number of Class Types (ES)	Number of Class Types (MS)	Number of Class Types (HS)	X	Max Students Per Room	=	Total Program Capacity	Utilization Calculation
Pre-Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	Current Enrollment
Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	278
General Purpose Classroom			28		25		700	
Computer Lab	n/a		2		25		50	Total Program Capacity
Art Lab	n/a		1		25		25	1208
Music Classroom	n/a		2		25		50	
Special Ed Pull-out					0		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (PK-5)					6		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (6-12)	n/a		5		12		60	
Special Ed Level 2: (PK-12)					12		0	
Special Ed Level 3: (PK-12)			2		8		16	
Special Education Classroom			7		6		42	Utilization Calculation
Technical Education/ Voc Ag	n/a		2		20		40	23%
Physical Education	n/a		2		50		100	
Science Classroom/Lab	n/a		3		25		75	Desirable Utilization
Business Education	n/a		2		25		50	85%
Family Liv/Cons Economics	n/a				25		0	
Totals	0	0	56				1208	Difference
								-62%

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Facility Spaces Evaluation / Utilization Analysis Sheet

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	43798
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978

Individual School Utilization Analysis								
	Grade Config		Age of Facility	No. of Renovations	Square Ft	Portables	Location (City, St)	
Lowest Grade Level:	7	7 - 12	46		50,500	0	Paden City, WV	
Highest Grade Level:	12							
Complete ONLY the column below associated with the highest grade level for this school.								
Classroom Type	Number of Class Types (ES)	Number of Class Types (MS)	Number of Class Types (HS)	X	Max Students Per Room	=	Total Program Capacity	Utilization Calculation
Pre-Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	Current Enrollment
Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	146
General Purpose Classroom			9		25		225	Total Program Capacity
Computer Lab	n/a				25		0	437
Art Lab	n/a		1		25		25	
Music Classroom	n/a		1		25		25	
Special Ed Pull-out					0		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (PK-5)					6		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (6-12)	n/a				12		0	
Special Ed Level 2: (PK-12)					12		0	
Special Ed Level 3: (PK-12)					8		0	
Special Education Classroom			2		6		12	Utilization Calculation
Technical Education/ Voc Ag	n/a				20		0	33%
Physical Education	n/a		1		50		50	
Science Classroom/Lab	n/a		2		25		50	Desirable Utilization
Business Education	n/a		1		25		25	85%
Family Liv/Cons Economics	n/a		1		25		25	
Totals	0	0	18				437	Difference
								-52%

BUILDING PROGRAM UTILIZATION WORKSHEET
Worksheet #3

County: Wetzel School: New Martinsville School Current Enrollment: 837

Number Classroom Types	x	Maximum Pupils/Class Type	=	Total Program Capacity
6 K		20		120
18 1 - 4		25		450
15 5-8		25		375
4 Science		25		100
2 Art (+1 K-4)		25		50
2 Music (+1 K-4)		25		50
1 PE (+1 K-4)		70		70
1 Tech Ed		20		20
1 Home Ec		25		25
1 Empty		25		25
3 Sp Ed Self Con		8		24
12 Sp Ed Resource		0		0
4 Comp Lab		0		0
3 Speech Resource		0		0
2 Reading Resource		0		0
Totals <u>75</u>				1309

Program Utilization = $\frac{837}{\text{Current Enrollment}}$ divided by $\frac{1309}{\text{Total Program Capacity}}$

PROGRAM UTILIZATION = 60.2% Desirable Program Capacity = 85%

Instructions for Calculating Program Utilization

Elementary School - Calculate the number and type of classrooms using the maximum program capacity for each regular or special classroom. Assume for example - that all students are seated in a first period block without pullout programs. Do not include library/media, cafeteria, itinerent spaces, resource rooms, or optional academic classrooms such as art, music and computer labs that act as pullout programs to support core curriculum.

Secondary School - Middle/Junior High School programs where various schedules exist, calculate the number and type of classrooms using the maximum program capacity for each regular or special classroom. Assume for example, that all students are seated in a first period block and exclude library/media, commons, or any space that cannot be used for other course offerings in the daily capacity of each facility. The maximum capacity for instructional spaces for specialty classrooms is counted on. A specialty classroom may be available throughout the school day but due to its specialized design or equipment it is rendered impractical to use for other instructional purposes.

SRA 156

Magnolia High School







Paden City High School







New Martinsville School







School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Campus Information Sheet

Full AC Firm Name: **McKinley Architecture and Engineering**
 County Name: **West Virginia**
 Campus Name: **Magnolia High School**
 Campus Type: **High School**
 LEA ID: **092552**

Original Construction Yr: **1988**
 Assessment Date: **11/29/20**
 Current Enrollment: **872**

School Photo



Insert Photo Here

Pavements						
System	Material	Year Installed If different From Building	Condition	SF	Notes	Message
Pedestrian Pavements	Concrete		2 - Below Average	4,000	Severe issues in loading dock area and some walkways pose safety and code issues.	
Site Pavements - Parking	Asphalt		3 - Average	15000	Majority of site parking on leased land not part of assessment.	

Permanent Buildings										
Record	Building Name	Predominant Building Type	Include building in Assessment	Year Built	Located in Floodplains or Floodway?	GSF	Basement (Y/N)	# Floors (incl. Bsm)	Message	Evaluation Status
1	Magnolia HS	Classroom	Y	1988	Yes, Completely	216,800	n	2		29 of 29 systems have been evaluated
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
Total GSF:						216,800				

Portable Buildings				
Record	Building Name	Year Installed	GSF	Message
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Total GSF:				

Overview of Findings
Exterior lighting needs upgraded and increased in quantity.
Defined dining area needs added; school originally designed for open campus, now closed.
Cameral system upgrades to IP desired. Preferred Intraze Security Vestibule with direct office access not present. 2nd floor windows need replaced.
Fencing upgrades need for pre-k component at school as well as age appropriate updates.
Typical masonry issues for construction type prevalent throughout. Multiple areas of masonry cracking require further review and corrections.
Typical vibration issues associated with span and floor joist construction prevalent on 2nd floor.
Typical SOD cracking and translating through floor finishes observed.
Bleacher systems need replaced.
Not part of assessment, but athletic facilities inadequate.
Corrections to exterior concrete & loading dock need asap.
Numerous paving issues (some on leased property used by school).
Cooling towers, Controls, Boiler and hydronic piping issues reported. No BAS Controls at school and difficult for central control and monitoring. HVAC equipment and hydronic piping needs evaluation for Replacement. Equipment is nearing end of useful life. Gymnasium conditioning desired for ventilation and cooling.
Sanitary floor drain issues in original vocational space.
Elevator needs replaced.

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 234 Data Collection Form
Building Information Sheet

Building	Magnolia HS	Year Built	1988	# Floors	
Gross Square Feet	158,800 (7/2)	Basement	n	(incl. Basement)	2

System	Material	Count	Year Installed if different from Building	Condition	Notes	29 of 29 systems have been evaluated	Messages
Conveying Systems	Elevator (2) Steps	2		2 - Below Average	Numerous maintenance issues reported.		
Electrical - Branch Wiring				3 - Average			
Electrical - Lighting	Fluorescent			3 - Average	Some fixtures yellowed		
Electrical - Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs				2 - Below Average	Some Exit signs missing. Connected toward of main panel, no evidence of battery backup.		
Electrical - Service and Distribution				4 - Above Average	60-D switchgear looks newer than building. Adequate spares.		
Equipment & Furnishings - Institutional Equipment	Indevite Commercial		2018	4 - Above Average	Weighted equip in addition.		
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Doors	Metal		2013	4 - Above Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Wall Finishes	Masonry			3 - Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Windows	Double Pane, Fixed, All Frame			4 - Above Average	1st floor all reglazed, upper are operable not fixed and roll present in form.		
Fire Protection - Fire Alarm & Detection				3 - Average			
Fire Protection - Sprinklers and Standpipes				2 - Below Average	Sprinkler heads need replaced with bulb-type heads.		
HVAC - Terminal & Package Units				Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
HVAC - Distribution System				1 - Inadequate	Hydronic system needs replaced.		
HVAC - Heat Generating Systems				1 - Inadequate	Modular boilers old, inefficient. Feeds heat pumps throughout building.		
HVAC - Cooling Generating Systems				3 - Average	Cooling Tower, feeds heat pumps throughout building.		
HVAC - Controls and Instrumentation				1 - Inadequate	System has outdated interface capabilities.		
Interior Construction - Interior Doors	Solid Core Wood			3 - Average			
Interior Construction - Schedules and Casework				3 - Average			
Interior Finishes - Ceiling Finishes	Acoustical Tile With Suspension Grid			2 - Below Average	Many tiles need replaced.		
Interior Finishes - Floor Finishes				3 - Average			
Interior Finishes - Gymnasium Floor Finishes				4 - Above Average			
Interior Finishes - Wall Finishes	Painted CMU			2 - Below Average	Numerous cracking issues observed.		
Plumbing - Domestic Water Distribution				3 - Average			
Plumbing - Fixtures	Metal			3 - Average	One small wrist drain on lav faucets. Drinking fountains not ADA.		
Plumbing - Rain Water Drainage				3 - Average			
Plumbing - Sanitary Sewer				3 - Average			
Roofing - Roof Coverings	Membrane, Direct Glue		2008	3 - Average			
Security System				1 - Inadequate	No "mantrap" with access to the main office.		
Technology Infrastructure				3 - Average			

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility General Information Sheet

1 - Facility General Information Worksheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116,800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988

Energy Indexes

(List the total amount of each fuel source used for one year)

Source (Units)	Consumption per Year	Conversion (BTU/Unit)	Total BTU
Electric (Kilowatt-Hrs)	849,849	3,412	2,899,803,767
Natural Gas (MCF) –OR–	5,066	1,037,000	5,253,442,000
Natural Gas (Decotherms)		1,000,000	-
Coal (Tons)		24,000,000	-
#2 Fuel Oil (Gallons)		138,874	-
Propane (Pounds)		21,600	-
Used Oil (Gallons)		125,000	-
Wood Chips (Tons)		16,500,000	-
Other (specify)			
Amount:			
Units:			
		Total BTU:	8,153,245,767
		Energy Utilization Index (EUI):	69,805

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Site Evaluation Sheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116,800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988

2 - Site Evaluation Worksheet

Site

City or Rural:	City
Actual Acres:	2.8
Useable Acres:	2.8
Site adequate for expansion:	No
Are public parks/areas adjacent:	Yes
% site out of flood plain:	100%
% site in flood plain:	0%

Site Remarks:

Overall Site Condition: 3-Average

Drainage

Drainage Remarks:

Overall Drainage Condition: 2-Below Average

Parking

Parking Adequately Lit:	Yes
Adequacy of Parking:	1-Inadequate

Parking Remarks:

Overall Parking Condition: 2-Below Average

Bus Loading

Bus Loading Adequate:	Yes
-----------------------	-----

Bus Loading Remarks:

Overall Bus loading Condition: 3-Average

Access Roads

Adequacy of On-Site Access Roads:	2-Below Average
Adequacy of Off-Site Access Roads:	3-Average

Access Roads Remarks:

Overall Access Road Condition: 3-Average

Playfields/Playcourts

Adequacy of Playfields: 3-Average
 Adequacy of Playcourts: 3-Average

Playfields/Playcourts Remarks:
 Overall Playfield/Playcourts Condition: 3-Average

Site Utilities

Electrical Services:

Phase: 3
 Voltage: 480/277
 Amps: 2000
 Electric Utility Company: Municipal Utility
 Main Service Feed into Building:

Electrical Service Remarks:
 Overall Electrical Service Condition: 4-Above Average

Fuel Sources:

Natural Gas: Yes
 Coal:
 Fuel Oils:
 Propane:
 Other (Specify):
 Fuel Line Size (inches): 6
 Fuel Utility Company: Mountaineer Gas

Fuel Sources Remarks:
 Overall Fuel Sources Condition: 4-Above Average

Water Sources:

Public: Yes
 Well:
 Water Line Size (inches): 6
 Water Utility Company: New Martinsville PSD

Water Sources Remarks:
 Overall Water Sources Condition: 4-Above Average

Sewage Systems:

Public: Yes
 Septic:
 Other (Specify):
 Public Service District (PSD): City of New Martinsville

Sewage System Remarks:
 Overall Sewage System Condition: 4-Above Average

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Building Component Evaluation Sheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116,800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988

3 - Building Component Evaluation Worksheet

Building Structures:

Type: Load Bearing Masonry Steel Frame

Building Structures Remarks:

Overall Building Structure Condition:

Floor Structures:

Steel Joist/Concrete (floor area SF):

Wood Joists (floor area SF):

Slab on Grade (floor area SF):

Other (specify) / Floor area SF:

Floor Structure Remarks:

Overall Floor Structure Condition:

Roof:

Roof Structure: Steel Joists

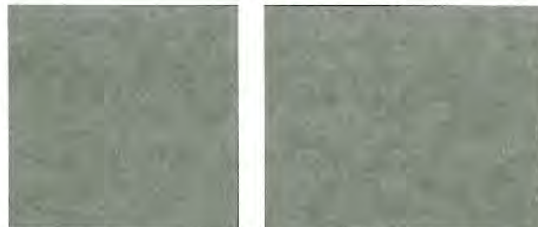
Roof Structures Remarks:

Overall Roof Condition:

Building Systems:

The systems below are addressed in the FCA data collection tool.

- Roof Coverings
- Wall Finishes
- Ceiling Finishes
- Floor Finishes
- Doors
- Windows
- HVAC
- Electrical
- Fire Alarm



Technology Infrastructure:

	Presence	Condition
Sufficient Electrical Capacity:	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	<input type="text" value="3-Average"/>
Power Receptacles Availability:	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	<input type="text" value="3-Average"/>
ID Network Type (if available):	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	<input type="text" value="2-Below Average"/>
Inventory Records Hardware	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	<input type="text" value="3-Average"/>

Other (specify):	
Deficiencies:	
Technology Remarks:	
Overall Technology Infrastructure Condition:	2-Below Average
Technology Assessment:	
Teacher Training:	4-Above Average
Software Use:	4-Above Average
Purchasing Practices:	4-Above Average
Network Administration:	4-Above Average
Inventory Records	
Other (specify):	
Deficiencies:	
Technology Remarks:	
Overall Technology Condition:	3-Average
School Access Safety Audit:	
Planning:	4-Above Average
Deterrence:	4-Above Average
Detection:	4-Above Average
Delay:	5-Excellent
Communication:	5-Excellent
Evacuation:	4-Above Average
Safety Remarks:	
Overall Access Safety Condition:	4-Above Average

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility Spaces Evaluation / Utilization Analysis Sheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	4/3/98
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988

Individual School Utilization Analysis								
	Grade Config	Age of Facility	No. of Renovations	Square Ft	Portables	Location (City, St)		
Lowest Grade Level:	9	9 - 12	36	116,800	0	New Martinsville, WV		
Highest Grade Level:	12							
Complete ONLY the column below associated with the highest grade level for this school.								
Classroom Type	Number of Class Types (ES)	Number of Class Types (MS)	Number of Class Types (HS)	X	Max Students Per Room	=	Total Program Capacity	Utilization Calculation
Pre-Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	Current Enrollment
Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	278
General Purpose Classroom			28		25		700	Total Program Capacity
Computer Lab	n/a		2		25		50	1208
Art Lab	n/a		1		25		25	
Music Classroom	n/a		2		25		50	
Special Ed Pull-out					0		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (PK-5)					6		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (6-12)	n/a		5		12		60	
Special Ed Level 2: (PK-12)					12		0	
Special Ed Level 3: (PK-12)			2		8		16	
Special Education Classroom			7		6		42	Utilization Calculation
Technical Education/ Voc Ag	n/a		2		20		40	23%
Physical Education	n/a		2		50		100	
Science Classroom/Lab	n/a		3		25		75	Desirable Utilization
Business Education	n/a		2		25		50	85%
Family Liv/Cons Economics	n/a				25		0	
Totals	0	0	56				1208	Difference
								-62%

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
School Improvement Cost Summary Sheet

LEA ID:	092502	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	116800
Facility Name:	Magnolia High School	Original Year of Construction:	1988
Design Capacity Enrollment:	1208		

Please note, the current-year costs shown below are intended to provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate of costs. While they are appropriate for high-level capital forecasting, they should not be relied upon for determining specific project funding values. Actual project costs will likely deviate from the presented values due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, hard and soft cost fluctuations and the actual date of construction for the intended project. Therefore, detailed cost estimates are recommended to validate funding requirements prior to obligating funds for facility replacement or renovation.

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
1. Site Work					
Land Acquisition	Acres			\$ -	
Excavation/Grade	CUB FT			\$ -	
Drainage	LIN FT			\$ -	
Walks (6 ft wide)	SQ FT	1	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 6,200.00	
Parking	SQ FT			\$ -	
Bus Loading	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roads	SQ FT			\$ -	
Playing Fields	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 256,773.00	\$ 256,773.00	specialties and casework
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				<u>\$ 262,973.00</u>	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
2. Renovations, Exterior					
Wall Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Floor Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roof Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Wall Facing	SQ FT	1	\$ 65,034.00	\$ 65,034.00	
Windows	EACH			\$ -	
Doors/Frames	EACH	1	\$ 543,821.00	\$ 543,821.00	
Roofing	SQ FT	1	\$ 641,933.00	\$ 641,933.00	
Coping/Parapet	LIN FT			\$ -	
Painting	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				<u>\$ 1,250,788.00</u>	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
3. Renovations, Interior					
Floor Covering	SQ FT	1	\$ 670,525.00	\$ 670,525.00	
Patch & Painting	SQ FT	1	\$ 692,951.00	\$ 692,951.00	
Ceiling Finish	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 1,437,481.00	
Plumbing	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 1,316,383.00	
Heating/Ventilating	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 4,242,924.00	
Air Conditioning	SQ FT			\$ -	
Lighting	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 1,582,126.00	
Wiring	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 1,207,619.00	
Fire Alarm	SQ FT	1	\$ 644,736.00	\$ 644,736.00	
Communication System	SQ FT			\$ -	
Technology		1	\$ 504,576.00	\$ 504,576.00	
Interior Doors	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 252,288.00	\$ 252,288.00	Security system
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 401,418.00	\$ 401,418.00	Institutional equipment
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				<u>#####</u>	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
4. Building Additions Including Furniture, Furnishings & Equipment					
Administration (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Student Services (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Kindergarten (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Primary (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Media Center (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Basic (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Reading (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Health Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Computer Lab (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	

Inst. Mat. Center (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Home Economics (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Art (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Ind. Technology (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Music (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Physical Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Auditorium (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Special Education (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Multi-Purpose (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Kitchen (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Dining (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Business Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Co-Op Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Drivers Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Staff/Faculty (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Toilets/Fixtures (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Storage General (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Storage Instructional (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Custodial (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Mechanical (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Circulation	30%			\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

5. Special Construction	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Elevator	EACH	1	\$ 77,368.00	\$ 77,368.00	
Sprinkler Systems	SQ FT	1	\$ 729,953.00	\$ 729,953.00	
Kitchen Equipment	ALL			\$ -	
Waste Treatment	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 807,321.00	

6. Other Special Costs	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
Sub-Total			\$ -	

7. Architectural/Engineering Fees	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovations	6%	#####	\$ 916,446.54	
Sub-Total			\$ 916,446.54	

8. Miscellaneous	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Survey	EACH			\$ -	
Soil Ins.	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

9. Contingencies	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovation	3%	#####	\$ 458,223.27	
Sub-Total			\$ 458,223.27	

Grand Total Project Cost	#####
---------------------------------	-------

Reference Data from Prior Sheets (for WVDE Use Only):	
Energy Utilization Index:	69,805
Current Enrollment:	372
Program Capacity:	1,208
Utilization Calculation:	31%
Building(s) in Floodplain/Floodway:	1

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 184 Data Collection Form
Campus Information sheet

Full AE Firm Name: **Melvin Architecture and Engineering**
 County Name: **Wetzel**
 Campus Name: **Paden City High School**
 Campus Type: **Elem/Secondary**
 LEA ID: **092503**

Original Construction Yr: **1979**
 Assessment Date: **11/29/22**
 Current Enrollment: **382**



Pavements						
System	Material	Year Installed if different from Building	Condition	SF	Notes	Message
Pedestrian Pavements	Asphalt		2 - Below Average	6,500		
Site Pavements - Parking	Asphalt		2 - Below Average	22000		

Permanent Buildings										
Record	Building Name	Predominant Building Type	Include building in Assessment	Year Built	Located in Floodplain or Flowway?	GSF	Basement (Y/N)	# Floors (incl. Bsmnt)	Message	Evaluation Status
1	High School	Classroom	Y	1978	No	44,000	Y	3		29 of 29 systems have been evaluated
2	Cafeteria	Cafeteria/Multipurpose	Y	1987	No	6,500	N	1		9 of 29 systems have been evaluated
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
Total GSF:						50,500				

Portable Buildings				
Record	Building Name	Year Installed	GSF	Message
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Total GSF:				

Overview of Findings
Exterior lighting needs upgraded and increased in quantity.
Camera system upgrades to IP desired.
Multiple areas of masonry cracking require further review and corrections.
Elevator needs replaced.
Boiler issues reported: No BAS Controls at school and difficult for central control and monitoring. Gymnasium conditioning desired for ventilation and cooling.
Issues in athletic field house structure not part of evaluation.

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Building Information Sheet

Building	High School	Year Built	1978		
Gross Square Feet	44,000	Basement (Y/N)	Y	# Floors (incl. Basement)	3

System	Material	Cost	Year Installed if different from Building		Condition	Notes	29 of 39 systems have been evaluated	Messages
Conveying Systems	Elevator (2) Stairs			1	2 - Below Average	Maintenance reported numerous issues.		
Electrical - Branch Wiring					3 - Average			
Electrical - Lighting	Fluorescent				2 - Below Average	Fixture diffusers are beginning to turn yellow. New LED in Gym.		
Electrical - Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs					2 - Below Average	No egress emergency lighting outside the building. Could use more Exit signs.		
Electrical - Service and Distribution					1 - Average	Old Westinghouse switchgear. Parts may be obsolete. Some S/D panels.		
Equipment & Furnishings - Institutional Equipment	Includes Commercial				3 - Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Doors	Metal				4 - Above Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Wall Finishes	Masonry				1 - Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Windows	Double Pane Insul. Gl. Frame				4 - Above Average			
Fire Protection - Fire Alarm & Detection					3 - Average			
Fire Protection - Sprinklers and Standpipes					2 - Below Average	Sprinkler heads need replaced with heat style heads.		
HVAC - Terminal & Package Units					2 - Below Average	No gas air conditioning. Main AHU very old. New condensing unit feeds AHU. Boilers are old and need replaced.		If Terminal & Package Units are present, Cooling & Heat Generating Systems cannot be present.
HVAC - Distribution System					2 - Below Average	Old inefficient HVAC system.		
HVAC - Heat Generating Systems					Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
HVAC - Cooling Generating Systems					Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
HVAC - Controls and Instrumentation					1 - Inadequate	Old Allen Bradley system.		
Interior Construction - Interior Doors	Steel				3 - Average			
Interior Construction - Specialties and Casework					2 - Below Average	PLM original exhibiting issues.		
Interior Finishes - Ceiling Finishes	Acoustical Tile				2 - Below Average	Recently Acoustic Ceiling System, but I think this is the intent. Some new, some old, based on job.		
Interior Finishes - Floor Finishes	Wood Composition Tile				4 - Above Average			
Interior Finishes - Gymnasium Floor Finishes					4 - Above Average			
Interior Finishes - Wall Finishes	Painted Gypsum				3 - Average	Some masonry structural corrections required, but not related to finishes.		
Plumbing - Domestic Water Distribution					3 - Average			
Plumbing - Fixtures	Mixval				3 - Average			
Plumbing - Rain Water Drainage					3 - Average			
Plumbing - Sanitary Sewer					1 - Average	Does have problems with building drain at times.		
Roofing - Roof Coverings	Membrane, Direct Gable			2010	3 - Average			
Security System					2 - Below Average	Could use more cameras. No entry "Intrusion".		
Technology Infrastructure					3 - Average			

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Building Information Sheet

Building	Cafeteria	Year Built	1987	# Floors	
Gross Square Feet	6,500	Basement (Y/N)	N	(incl. Bemt)	1

System	Material	Count	Year Installed if different from Building	Condition	Notes	9 of 29 systems have been evaluated	Messages
Conveying Systems				Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
Electrical - Branch Wiring							
Electrical - Lighting							
Electrical - Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs							
Electrical - Service and Distribution							
Equipment & Furnishings - Institutional Equipment	Includes Commercial						
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Doors	Metal			2015	4 - Above Average		
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Wall Finishes	Masonry				3 - Average		
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Windows	Double Pane, Fixed, All frame			2015	4 - Above Average		
Fire Protection - Fire Alarm & Detection							
Fire Protection - Sprinklers and Standpipes							
HVAC - Terminal & Package Units							
HVAC - Distribution System							
HVAC - Heat Generating Systems							
HVAC - Cooling Generating Systems							
HVAC - Controls and Instrumentation							
Interior Construction - Interior Doors	Steel				3 - Average		
Interior Construction - Specialties and Casework							
Interior Finishes - Ceiling Finishes	Acoustical Tile				2 - Below Average	Acoustic Panel actually.	
Interior Finishes - Floor Finishes	Ceramic Tile				4 - Above Average		
Interior Finishes - Gymnasium Floor Finishes							
Interior Finishes - Wall Finishes	Painted CMU				3 - Average		
Plumbing - Domestic Water Distribution							
Plumbing - Fixtures							
Plumbing - Rain Water Drainage							
Plumbing - Sanitary Sewer							
Roofing - Roof Coverings	Membrane, Direct Glue				4 - Above Average		
Security System							
Technology Infrastructure							

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility General Information Sheet

1 - Facility General Information Worksheet

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50,500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978

Energy Indexes

(List the total amount of each fuel source used for one year)

Source (Units)	Consumption per Year	Conversion (BTU/Unit)	Total BTU
Electric (Kilowatt-Hrs)	488,286	3,412	1,666,100,192
Natural Gas (MCF) --OR--	1,927	1,037,000	1,998,299,000
Natural Gas (Decootherms)		1,000,000	-
Coal (Tons)		24,000,000	-
#2 Fuel Oil (Gallons)		138,874	-
Propane (Pounds)		21,600	-
Used Oil (Gallons)		125,000	-
Wood Chips (Tons)		16,500,000	-
Other (specify)			-
Amount:			-
Units:			-
		Total BTU:	3,664,399,192
		Energy Utilization Index (EUI):	72,562

**School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Site Evaluation Sheet**

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50,500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978

2 - Site Evaluation Worksheet

Site

City or Rural:	City
Actual Acres:	1
Useable Acres:	1
Site adequate for expansion:	No
Are public parks/areas adjacent:	Yes
% site out of flood plain:	100%
% site in flood plain:	0%

Site Remarks:

Overall Site Condition: 3-Average

Drainage

Drainage Remarks:

Overall Drainage Condition: 3-Average

Parking

Parking Adequately Lit:	No
Adequacy of Parking:	1-Inadequate

Parking Remarks:

Overall Parking Condition: 2-Below Average

Bus Loading

Bus Loading Adequate:	No
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Bus Loading Remarks:

Overall Bus loading Condition: 2-Below Average

Access Roads

Adequacy of On-Site Access Roads:	2-Below Average
Adequacy of Off-Site Access Roads:	3-Average

Access Roads Remarks:

Overall Access Road Condition: 3-Average

Playfields/Playcourts

Adequacy of Playfields: 2-Below Average
 Adequacy of Playcourts: 2-Below Average

Playfields/Playcourts Remarks:
 Overall Playfield/Playcourts Condition: 2-Below Average

Site Utilities

Electrical Services:

Phase: 3
 Voltage: 208/120
 Amps: 1200
 Electric Utility Company: Mon Power
 Main Service Feed into Building: Overhead

Electrical Service Remarks:
 Overall Electrical Service Condition: 2-Below Average

Fuel Sources:

Natural Gas: Yes
 Coal:
 Fuel Oils:
 Propane:
 Other (Specify):
 Fuel Line Size (inches): 3
 Fuel Utility Company: Dominion Energy

Fuel Sources Remarks:
 Overall Fuel Sources Condition: 3-Average

Water Sources:

Public: Yes
 Well: No
 Water Line Size (inches): 3
 Water Utility Company: Paden City PSD

Water Sources Remarks:
 Overall Water Sources Condition: 4-Above Average

Sewage Systems:

Public: Yes
 Septic:
 Other (Specify):
 Public Service District (PSD): City of Paden City

Sewage System Remarks:
 Overall Sewage System Condition: 3-Average

**School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Building Component Evaluation Sheet**

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50,500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978

3 - Building Component Evaluation Worksheet

Building Structures:

Type:

Load Bearing Masonry	Steel Frame
----------------------	-------------

Building Structures Remarks:

--

Overall Building Structure Condition:

3-Average

Floor Structures:

Steel Joist/Concrete (floor area SF):

12,559

Wood Joists (floor area SF):

--

Slab on Grade (floor area SF):

27,800

Other (specify) / Floor area SF:

Wood Gym Floor on Steel Joist	8,800
-------------------------------	-------

Floor Structure Remarks:

--

Overall Floor Structure Condition:

3-Average

Roof:

Roof Structure:

Steel Joists

Roof Structures Remarks:

--

Overall Roof Condition:

3-Average

Building Systems:

The systems below are addressed in the FCA data collection tool.

Roof Coverings	
Wall Finishes	
Ceiling Finishes	
Floor Finishes	
Doors	
Windows	
HVAC	
Electrical	
Fire Alarm	

Technology Infrastructure:

	<u>Presence</u>	<u>Condition</u>
Sufficient Electrical Capacity:	Yes	3-Average
Power Receptacles Availability:	Yes	3-Average
ID Network Type (if available):	Yes	2-Below Average
Inventory Records Hardware	Yes	2-Below Average

Other (specify): [Redacted]

Deficiencies: [Redacted]

Technology Remarks:
Overall Technology Infrastructure Condition: 2-Below Average

Technology Assessment:

Teacher Training: 4-Above Average

Software Use: 4-Above Average

Purchasing Practices: 4-Above Average

Network Administration: 4-Above Average

Inventory Records: [Redacted]

Other (specify): [Redacted]

Deficiencies: [Redacted]

Technology Remarks:
Overall Technology Condition: 3-Average

School Access Safety Audit:

Planning: 4-Above Average

Deterrence: 4-Above Average

Detection: 5-Excellent

Delay: 5-Excellent

Communication: 5-Excellent

Evacuation: 5-Excellent

Safety Remarks:
Overall Access Safety Condition: 4-Above Average

The main office is not located by the main entrance or the overall rating would be excellent

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility Spaces Evaluation / Utilization Analysis Sheet

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	43798
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978

Individual School Utilization Analysis								
	Grade Config	Age of Facility	No. of Renovations	Square Ft	Portables	Location (City, St)		
Lowest Grade Level:	7	7 - 12	46	50,500	0	Paden City, WV		
Highest Grade Level:	12							
Complete ONLY the column below associated with the highest grade level for this school.								
Classroom Type	Number of Class Types (ES)	Number of Class Types (MS)	Number of Class Types (HS)	X	Max Students Per Room	=	Total Program Capacity	Utilization Calculation
Pre-Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	
Kindergarten (Full Day)					20		0	Current Enrollment
General Purpose Classroom			9		25		225	146
Computer Lab	n/a				25		0	Total Program Capacity
Art Lab	n/a		1		25		25	437
Music Classroom	n/a		1		25		25	
Special Ed Pull-out					0		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (PK-5)					6		0	
Special Ed Level 1: (6-12)	n/a				12		0	
Special Ed Level 2: (PK-12)					12		0	
Special Ed Level 3: (PK-12)					8		0	
Special Education Classroom			2		6		12	Utilization Calculation
Technical Education/ Voc Ag	n/a				20		0	33%
Physical Education	n/a		1		50		50	
Science Classroom/Lab	n/a		2		25		50	Desirable Utilization
Business Education	n/a		1		25		25	85%
Family Liv/Cons Economics	n/a		1		25		25	
Totals	0	0	18				437	Difference
								-52%

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
School Improvement Cost Summary Sheet

LEA ID:	092503	Assessment Date:	11/29/19
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	50500
Facility Name:	Paden City High School	Original Year of Construction:	1978
Design Capacity Enrollment:	437		

Please note, the current-year costs shown below are intended to provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate of costs. While they are appropriate for high-level capital forecasting, they should not be relied upon for determining specific project funding values. Actual project costs will likely deviate from the presented values due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, hard and soft cost fluctuations and the actual date of construction for the intended project. Therefore, detailed cost estimates are recommended to validate funding requirements prior to obligating funds for facility replacement or renovation.

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
1. Site Work					
Land Acquisition	Acres			\$ -	
Excavation/Grade	CUB FT			\$ -	
Drainage	LIN FT			\$ -	
Walks (6 ft wide)	SQ FT	1	\$ 6,975.00	\$ 6,975.00	
Parking	SQ FT			\$ -	
Bus Loading	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roads	SQ FT	1	\$ 108,900.00	\$ 108,900.00	
Playing Fields	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 115,875.00	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
2. Renovations, Exterior					
Wall Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Floor Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roof Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Wall Facing	SQ FT	1	\$ 28,118.00	\$ 28,118.00	
Windows	EACH			\$ -	
Doors/Frames	EACH			\$ -	
Roofing	SQ FT	1	\$ 232,668.00	\$ 232,668.00	
Coping/Parapet	LIN FT			\$ -	
Painting	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 111,020.00	\$ 111,020.00	specialties and casework
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 371,806.00	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
3. Renovations, Interior					
Floor Covering	SQ FT	1	\$ 252,595.00	\$ 252,595.00	
Patch & Painting	SQ FT	1	\$ 299,606.00	\$ 299,606.00	
Ceiling Finish	SQ FT	1	\$ 621,514.00	\$ 621,514.00	
Plumbing	SQ FT	1	\$ 569,156.00	\$ 569,156.00	
Heating/Ventilating	SQ FT	1	#####	\$ 1,984,180.00	
Air Conditioning	SQ FT			\$ -	
Lighting	SQ FT	1	\$ 684,052.00	\$ 684,052.00	
Wiring	SQ FT	1	\$ 522,130.00	\$ 522,130.00	
Fire Alarm	SQ FT	1	\$ 278,760.00	\$ 278,760.00	
Communication System	SQ FT	1	\$ 109,080.00	\$ 109,080.00	
Technology		1	\$ 218,160.00	\$ 218,160.00	
Interior Doors	EACH	1	\$ 235,128.00	\$ 235,128.00	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 173,558.00	\$ 173,558.00	Institutional equipment
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 23,400.00	\$ 23,400.00	service and distribution
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$5,971,319.00	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
4. Building Additions Including Furniture, Furnishings & Equipment					
Administration (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Student Services (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Kindergarten (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Primary (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Media Center (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Basic (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Reading (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Health Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Computer Lab (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	

Inst. Mat. Center (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Home Economics (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Art (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Ind. Technology (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Music (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Physical Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Auditorium (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Special Education (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Multi-Purpose (ES)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Kitchen (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Dining (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Business Education (MS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Co-Op Education (MS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Drivers Education (MS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Staff/Faculty (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Toilets/Fixtures (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Storage General (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Storage Instructional (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Custodial (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Mechanical (MS, HS)	SQ FT		\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')			\$ -	
Circulation	30%		\$ -	
Sub-Total			\$ -	

5. Special Construction	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Elevator	EACH	1	\$ 77,722.00	\$ 77,722.00	
Sprinkler Systems	SQ FT	1	\$ 315,604.00	\$ 315,604.00	
Kitchen Equipment	ALL			\$ -	
Waste Treatment	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 393,326.00	

6. Other Special Costs	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
Sub-Total			\$ -	

7. Architectural/Engineering Fees	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovations	6%	6,852,326	\$ 411,139.56	
Sub-Total			\$ 411,139.56	

8. Miscellaneous	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Survey	EACH			\$ -	
Soil Inv.	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

9. Contingencies	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovation	3%	6,852,326	\$ 205,569.78	
Sub-Total			\$ 205,569.78	

Grand Total Project Cost	\$7,469,035.34
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Reference Data from Prior Sheets (for WVDE Use Only):	
Energy Utilization Index:	72,562
Current Enrollment:	182
Program Capacity:	437
Utilization Calculation:	42%
Building(s) in Floodplain/Floodway:	0

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Campus Information Sheet

Full AE Firm Name: **McKinley Architecture and Engineering**
 County Name: **Wetzel**
 Campus Name: **New Martinsville School**
 Campus Type: **Non-Traditional**
 LEA ID: **022202**

Original Construction Yr: **1990**
 Assessment Date: **11/29/20**
 Current Enrollment: **137**

School Photo



Insert Photo Here

Pavements					
System	Material	Year installed # of feet from building	Condition	SF	Notes
Pedestrian Pavements	Asphalt	2018	4 - Above Average	82,500	concrete walkways at front renovated in 2019
Site Pavements - Parking	Asphalt	2018	4 - Above Average	28,500	includes artificial grass, and athletic surfaces

Permanent Buildings										
Record	Building Name	Predominant Building Type	Include building in Assessment	Year Built	Locked in Floodplain or Floodway?	GSF	Basement (Y/N)	# Floors (incl. Bsm)	Message	Evaluation Status
1	New Martinsville School	Classroom	N	1976	No	124,700	N	1		
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
Total GSF:						124,700				

Portable Buildings				
Record	Building Name	Year Installed	GSF	Message
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Total GSF:				

Overview of Findings
Exterior lighting needs upgraded and increased.
Original K-3 building needs complete MEP renovation.
General system upgrades to IP desired. Preferred Entrance Security Vestibule with direct office access not present. Non 75 addition windows and entrance glazing needs replaced.
Fencing upgrades.
Toilet room upgrades.
Sanitary floor drain issues in original K-3 and exterior sanitary piping.
Replace fire alarm system and upgrade data wiring. Replace main electrical switchgear. 0
Domestic water components, HW tanks etc., for 96 Addition need replaced.
K-3 Area not sprinklered needs full system.
Some areas of roofing need replaced.
Flooring and ceiling upgrades throughout.

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Building Information Sheet

Building	New Martinsville School	Year Built	1976	#Floors	
Gross Square Feet	114,700	Basement	N	Level (s)	1

System	Material	Count	Year Installed if different from Building	Condition	Notes	29 of 29 systems have been evaluated	Remarks
Generating Systems				Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
Electrical - Branch Wiring				3 - Average			
Electrical - Lighting	Fluorescent			3 - Average			
Electrical - Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs				1 - Inadequate	Some exit signs not lit		
Electrical - Service and Distribution				2 - Below Average	Very old panels in some areas of the building.		
Equipment & Furnishings - Institutional Equipment	Insulate Commercial			3 - Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Doors	Metl		2012	4 - Above Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Wall Finishes	Masonry			3 - Average			
Exterior Enclosure - Exterior Windows	Double Pane, Plastic all glass			3 - Average	Some operable windows need replaced, fixed thermostats need replaced in 2018.		
Fire Protection - Fire Alarm & Detection				1 - Inadequate	Not an addressable system.		
Fire Protection - Sprinklers and Standpipes				1 - Inadequate	Some wings of the facility are not sprinkled. Existing sprinklers are outdated and need to be replaced with bulk type sprinklers.		
HVAC - Terminal & Package Units				Not Present			Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
HVAC - Distribution System				2 - Below Average	Middle School replaced in 2010, Elementary School original.		
HVAC - Heat Generating System				2 - Below Average	Boilers need replaced.		
HVAC - Cooling Generating System				4 - Above Average	Chiller replaced in 2010.		
HVAC - Controls and Instrumentation				3 - Average			
Interior Construction - Interior Doors	Steel			2 - Below Average	About 10/20 HW/WO hardware set upgrades needed.		
Interior Construction - Specialties and Casework				2 - Below Average	Original casework aged.		
Interior Finishes - Ceiling Finishes	Acoustical Tile			3 - Average	Acoustical acoustical panels. Replacement of panels needed in several areas.		
Interior Finishes - Floor Finishes	Carpet			2 - Below Average	Carpet wear evident. Various floor systems (at least 13) in building.		
Interior Finishes - Staircase Floor Finishes		2000		4 - Above Average	Polished wood, suspect regarding accessibility.		
Interior Finishes - Wall Finishes				Not Present	Acoustical system in deteriorable metal condition/masonry 2nd.		Please confirm absence of system with Facility Manager.
Plumbing - Domestic Water Distribution				2 - Below Average	Plumbing very good in Elementary School (E-3). A lot of exposed piping.		
Plumbing - Fixtures	Mixtur			2 - Below Average	Overflows are present associated with old floor drain facilities. Water coolers not ADA compliant. Some urinals are in the floor type.		
Plumbing - Rain Water Drainage				3 - Average			
Plumbing - Sanitary Sewer				1 - Inadequate	Problems with sanitary sewer in elementary school (E-3) and Middle School has developed some leaks. Grease trap needs to be replaced.		
Roofing - Roof Coverings	Membrane		2018	3 - Average	Some limited areas of membrane need replaced. Copper roof in 78 and metal roof in 98 are.		
Security Systems				2 - Below Average	the "man trap" at entry.		
Technology Infrastructure				3 - Average			

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Facility General Information Sheet

1 - Facility General Information Worksheet

LEA ID:	092202	Assessment Date:	11/29/20
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	124,700
Facility Name:	New Martinsville School	Original Year of Construction:	1950

Energy Indexes

(List the total amount of each fuel source used for one year)

Source (Units)	Consumption per Year	Conversion (BTU/Unit)	Total BTU
Electric (Kilowatt-Hrs)	1,252,476	3,412	4,273,623,459
Natural Gas (MCF) --OR--	1,673	1,037,000	1,734,901,000
Natural Gas (Decootherms)		1,000,000	-
Coal (Tons)		24,000,000	-
#2 Fuel Oil (Gallons)		138,874	-
Propane (Pounds)		21,600	-
Used Oil (Gallons)		125,000	-
Wood Chips (Tons)		16,500,000	-
Other (specify)			-
Amount:			-
Units:			-
		Total BTU:	6,008,524,459
		Energy Utilization Index (EUI):	48,184

School Building Authority of West Virginia
 SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
 Site Evaluation Sheet

LEA ID:	092202	Assessment Date:	11/29/20
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	124,700
Facility Name:	New Martinsville School	Original Year of Construction:	1950

2 - Site Evaluation Worksheet

Site

City or Rural:	City
Actual Acres:	17
Useable Acres:	17
Site adequate for expansion:	Yes
Are public parks/areas adjacent:	Yes
% site out of flood plain:	100%
% site in flood plain:	0%
Site Remarks:	
Overall Site Condition:	4-Above Average

Drainage

Drainage Remarks:	
Overall Drainage Condition:	3-Average

Parking

Parking Adequately Lit:	No
Adequacy of Parking:	3-Average
Parking Remarks:	
Overall Parking Condition:	3-Average

Bus Loading

Bus Loading Adequate:	Yes
Bus Loading Remarks:	
Overall Bus loading Condition:	4-Above Average

Access Roads

Adequacy of On-Site Access Roads:	4-Above Average
Adequacy of Off-Site Access Roads:	3-Average
Access Roads Remarks:	
Overall Access Road Condition:	3-Average

Playfields/Playcourts

Adequacy of Playfields:	4-Above Average
Adequacy of Playcourts:	4-Above Average
Playfields/Playcourts Remarks:	
Overall Playfield/Playcourts Condition:	4-Above Average

Site Utilities

Electrical Services:	
Phase:	3
Voltage:	277/480
Amps:	2000
Electric Utility Company:	Municipal Utility/Mon Power
Main Service Feed into Building:	Underground
Electrical Service Remarks:	
Overall Electrical Service Condition:	3-Average

Fuel Sources:	
Natural Gas:	Yes
Coal:	
Fuel Oils:	
Propane:	
Other (Specify):	
Fuel Line Size (inches):	4
Fuel Utility Company:	Mountaineer Gas
Fuel Sources Remarks:	
Overall Fuel Sources Condition:	3-Average

Water Sources:	
Public:	Yes
Well:	
Water Line Size (inches):	6
Water Utility Company:	New Martinsville PSD
Water Sources Remarks:	
Overall Water Sources Condition:	3-Average

Sewage Systems:	
Public:	Yes
Septic:	
Other (Specify):	
Public Service District (PSD):	City of New Martinsville
Sewage System Remarks:	
Overall Sewage System Condition:	3-Average

**School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
Building Component Evaluation Sheet**

LEA ID:	092202	Assessment Date:	11/29/20
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	124,700
Facility Name:	New Martinsville School	Original Year of Construction:	1950

3 - Building Component Evaluation Worksheet

Building Structures:

Type:

Load Bearing Masonry	
----------------------	--

Building Structures Remarks:

--

Overall Building Structure Condition:

3-Average

Floor Structures:

Steel Joist/Concrete (floor area SF):

5,800

Wood Joists (floor area SF):

--

Slab on Grade (floor area SF):

119,000

Other (specify) / Floor area SF:

--

Floor Structure Remarks:

--

Overall Floor Structure Condition:

2-Below Average

Roof:

Roof Structure:

Steel Joists	Wood Joists
--------------	-------------

Roof Structures Remarks:

Wood Rafters also

Overall Roof Condition:

3-Average

Building Systems:

The systems below are addressed in the FCA data collection tool.

Roof Coverings	
Wall Finishes	
Ceiling Finishes	
Floor Finishes	
Doors	
Windows	
HVAC	
Electrical	
Fire Alarm	

Technology Infrastructure:

	Presence	Condition
Sufficient Electrical Capacity:	Yes	3-Average
Power Receptacles Availability:	Yes	2-Below Average

ID Network Type (if available):	Yes	
Inventory Records Hardware	Yes	2-Below Average
Other (specify):		
Deficiencies:		
Technology Remarks:		
Overall Technology Infrastructure Cond	2-Below Average	

Technology Assessment:

Teacher Training:	4-Above Average	
Software Use:	4-Above Average	
Purchasing Practices:	4-Above Average	
Network Administration:	4-Above Average	
Inventory Records		
Other (specify):		
Deficiencies:		
Technology Remarks:		
Overall Technology Condition:	3-Average	

School Access Safety Audit:

Planning:	5-Excellent	
Deterrence:	4-Above Average	
Detection:	4-Above Average	
Delay:	5-Excellent	
Communication:	5-Excellent	
Evacuation:	5-Excellent	
Safety Remarks:	For the 2020-21 school year there is a shortage of school resource officers. This will result in NMS having one day a week without a SRO when students are in class. Cameras also need repaired from time to time.	
Overall Access Safety Condition:	4-Above Average	

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School and Paden City High School

BUILDING PROGRAM UTILIZATION WORKSHEET
Worksheet #3

County: Wetzel School: New Martinsville School Current Enrollment: 837

Number Classroom Types	x	Maximum Pupils/Class Type	=	Total Program Capacity
6 K		20		120
18 1-4		25		450
15 5-8		25		375
4 Science		25		100
2 Art (+1 K-4)		25		50
2 Music (+1 K-4)		25		50
1 PE (+1 K-4)		70		70
1 Tech Ed		20		20
1 Home Ec		25		25
1 Empty		25		25
3 Sp Ed Self/Con		8		24
12 Sp Ed Resource		0		0
4 Comp Lab		0		0
3 Speech Resource		0		0
2 Reading Resource		0		0
Totals	75			1309

Program Utilization = $\frac{837}{1309}$ divided by $\frac{1309}{1309}$
Current Enrollment Total Program Capacity

PROGRAM UTILIZATION = 60.2% Desirable Program Capacity = 85%

Instructions for Calculating Program Utilization

Elementary School - Calculate the number and type of classrooms using the maximum program capacity for each regular or special classroom. Assume for example - that all students are seated in a first period block without pullout programs. Do not include library/media, cafeteria, cafeteria spaces, resource rooms, or optional academic classrooms such as art, music and computer labs that act as pullout programs to support core curriculum.

Secondary School - Middle/Junior High School programs where various schedules exist, calculate the number and type of classrooms using the maximum program capacity for each regular or special classroom. Assume for example, that all students are seated in a first period block and exclude library/media, commons, or any space that cannot be used for other course offerings in the daily capacity of each facility. The maximum capacity for instructional spaces for specialty classrooms is counted on. A specialty classroom may be available throughout the school day but due to its specialized design or equipment it is rendered impractical to use for other instructional purposes.

SLA 156

School Building Authority of West Virginia
SBA Form 134 Data Collection Form
School Improvement Cost Summary Sheet

LEA ID:	092202	Assessment Date:	11/29/20
County:	Wetzel	Total Gross Square Feet:	124700
Facility Name:	New Martinsville School	Original Year of Construction:	1950
Design Capacity Enrollment:	1309		

Please note, the current-year costs shown below are intended to provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate of costs. While they are appropriate for high-level capital forecasting, they should not be relied upon for determining specific project funding values. Actual project costs will likely deviate from the presented values due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, hard and soft cost fluctuations and the actual date of construction for the intended project. Therefore, detailed cost estimates are recommended to validate funding requirements prior to obligating funds for facility replacement or renovation.

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
1. Site Work					
Land Acquisition	Acres			\$ -	
Excavation/Grade	CUB FT			\$ -	
Drainage	LIN FT			\$ -	
Walks (6 ft wide)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Parking	SQ FT			\$ -	
Bus Loading	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roads	SQ FT			\$ -	
Playing Fields	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
2. Renovations, Exterior					
Wall Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Floor Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Roof Structure	SQ FT			\$ -	
Wall Facing	SQ FT	1	\$ 94,572.00	\$ 94,572.00	
Windows	EACH	1	\$ 1,430,558.00	\$ 1,430,558.00	
Doors/Frames	EACH			\$ -	
Roofing	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,370,702.00	\$ 1,370,702.00	
Coping/Parapet	LIN FT			\$ -	
Painting	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 2,895,832.00	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
3. Renovations, Interior					
Floor Covering	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,351,548.00	\$ 1,351,548.00	
Patch & Painting	SQ FT			\$ -	
Ceiling Finish	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,589,775.00	\$ 1,589,775.00	
Plumbing	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,872,295.00	\$ 1,872,295.00	
Heating/Ventilating	SQ FT	1	\$ 2,304,456.00	\$ 2,304,456.00	
Air Conditioning	SQ FT			\$ -	
Lighting	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,689,136.00	\$ 1,689,136.00	
Wiring	SQ FT	1	\$ 1,289,298.00	\$ 1,289,298.00	
Fire Alarm	SQ FT	1	\$ 389,064.00	\$ 389,064.00	
Communication System	SQ FT	1	\$ 389,064.00	\$ 389,064.00	security system
Technology		1	\$ 688,344.00	\$ 688,344.00	
Interior Doors	EACH	1	\$ 1,071,422.00	\$ 1,071,422.00	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 580,603.00	\$ 580,603.00	specialties and casework
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 353,150.00	\$ 353,150.00	service and distribution
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')		1	\$ 1,167,192.00	\$ 1,167,192.00	institutional equipment
Sub-Total				\$ 14,735,347.00	

Improvement Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
4. Building Additions Including Furniture, Furnishings & Equipment					
Administration (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Student Services (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Kindergarten (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Primary (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Media Center (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Basic (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Reading (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Health Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Computer Lab (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

Inst. Mat. Center (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Home Economics (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Art (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Ind. Technology (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Music (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Physical Education (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Auditorium (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Special Education (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Multi-Purpose (ES)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Kitchen (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Dining (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Business Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Co-Op Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Drivers Education (MS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Staff/Faculty (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Toilets/Fixtures (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Storage General (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Storage Instructional (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Custodial (ES, MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Mechanical (MS, HS)	SQ FT			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Circulation	30%			\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

5. Special Construction	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Elevator	EACH			\$ -	
Sprinkler Systems	SQ FT	1	\$ 779,325.00	\$ 779,325.00	
Kitchen Equipment	ALL			\$ -	
Waste Treatment	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ 779,325.00	

6. Other Special Costs	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
Sub-Total			\$ -	

7. Architectural/Engineering Fees	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovations	6%	18,410,504	\$ 1,104,630.24	
Sub-Total			\$ 1,104,630.24	

8. Miscellaneous	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Remarks
Survey	EACH			\$ -	
Soil Inv.	EACH			\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Other (Describe in 'Remarks')				\$ -	
Sub-Total				\$ -	

9. Contingencies	%	Quantity	Item Cost	Remarks
New Construction			\$ -	
Renovation	3%	18,410,504	\$ 552,315.12	
Sub-Total			\$ 552,315.12	

Grand Total Project Cost	\$ 20,067,449.36
---------------------------------	------------------

Reference Data from Prior Sheets (for WVDE Use Only):	
Energy Utilization Index:	48,184
Current Enrollment:	837
Program Capacity:	1309
Utilization Calculation:	60.2%
Building(s) in Floodplain/Floodway:	0

Wetzel County School Magnolia High School/New Martinsville School and Paden City High School

Enrollment 2206													
FTE 2168.82													
Excluded 28													
Special Education 0													
English Learners 0													
Low SES 0													
Title I Low SES 0													
Homeless 0													
Unenrolled 182													

	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Totals
Services Wetzel											
Wetzel County Schools											
Long Drain School	18	11	16	20	22	20					181
New Martinsville School	76	76	71	78	75	62					812
Paden City Elementary School	18	21	18	22							166
Short Line School	36	29	30	28	40	37					367
Hundred High School							12	19	20	27	78
Magnolia High School							56	83	74	90	303
Paden City High School					27	25	17	29	29	33	160
Valley High School							32	27	35	45	139
Wetzel County Technical Education Center											
Totals	148	137	135	148	164	144	117	158	158	195	2206

WETZEL COUNTY SCHOOLS



333 Foundry Street
New Martinsville, WV 26155
Telephone (304) 455-2441
Fax (304) 455-3446

November 22, 2024

The Honorable Michele L. Blatt
Superintendent
West Virginia Department of Education
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, WV 25305-0330

Dear Superintendent Blatt:

Let this letter serve as proof that impact statements were delivered to:

Long Drain School
Hundred High School
New Martinsville School
Magnolia High School
Paden City Elementary School
Paden City High School
Short Line School
Valley High School
Wetzel County Technical Education Center
Wetzel County Bus Garage
Wetzel County Maintenance Facility
Wetzel County Board Office
Dan Wilson, Principal, Hundred High School
Stacey Walton, Principal, New Martinsville School
Melonie Miller, Principal, Magnolia High School
Elliott Kendle, Principal, Paden City High School
Janie Beckett, Principal, Valley High School
Courtney Cecil, LSIC Chair, Hundred High School
Brooke Albright, LSIC Chair, New Martinsville School
Roger Clegg, LSIC Chair, Magnolia High School
William Bell, LSIC Chair, Paden City High School
Lori Dallison, LSIC Chair, Valley High School

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cassandra R. Porter". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Cassandra R. Porter
Superintendent,
Wetzel County Schools

WETZEL CHRONICLE

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of New Jersey, County of Burlington, ss:

Casey Allen, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: That (s)he is a duly authorized signatory of Column Software, PBC, duly authorized agent of Wetzel Chronicle, a newspaper printed and published in the City of New Martinsville, County of Wetzel, State of West Virginia, and that this affidavit is Page 1 of 2 with the full text of the sworn-to notice set forth on the pages that follow, and the hereto attached:

PUBLICATION DATES:

Oct. 23, 2024

Oct. 30, 2024

Nov. 6, 2024

NOTICE ID: rKc3YtwzmTdQAQeFv500

PUBLISHER ID: LC0550

NOTICE NAME: Proposed Closure of Paden City High School

Publication Fee: 215.80

Casey Allen

(Signed) _____

LIZA ORTIZ
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
My Commission Expires November 27, 2028

VERIFICATION

State of New Jersey
County of Burlington

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me on this: 11/06/2024

Liza Ortiz

Notary Public

Notarized remotely online using communication technology via Proof.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Wetzel County Board of Education will hold three public hearings on the Superintendent's recommendation to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, as follows:

* **LOCATION:** Magnolia High School, 601 Maple Avenue,
DATE AND TIME: November 13, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

* **LOCATION:** New Martinsville School, 20 East Benjamin Drive, New Martinsville, WV
DATE AND TIME: November 14, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

* **LOCATION:** Paden City High School, 201 North Fourth Avenue, Paden City, WV
DATE AND TIME: November 15, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

If, at the time a hearing is called to order, the Board determines that the location is of insufficient size to accommodate all who desire to attend, the hearing will be recessed and moved to a new location of sufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend. If that happens, the new meeting location will be posted at the original meeting location.

If a public hearing is not completed by 11 p.m., it will be recessed, to be continued on a date and at a time designated and announced by the Board just prior to the hearing recess, to be continued day-to-day until concluded. The public hearings, as well as any reconvened session of the public hearings, shall end at the conclusion of each hearing's business or at 11 p.m., whichever occurs earlier.

ALTERNATE DATES AND TIMES

If, due to inclement weather or other cause, any hearing cannot be held on the scheduled date, the hearing or meeting will be held at the same location as originally scheduled, but on these dates and times:

- for the hearing at Magnolia High School, on November 14,

2024, beginning at 9 a.m.

*for the hearing at New Martinsville School, on November 15, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.

* for the hearing at Paden City High School, on November 16, 2024, beginning at 1 p.m.

If for any reason a hearing cannot be conducted on the alternate date or time, the Board will determine date and time.

HEARINGPROCEDURES

For a period of 30 minutes prior to the commencement of a public hearing, persons may and are encouraged to register at the hearing location for the purpose of making statements, offering testimony, and questioning school officials concerning the proposals. Each hearing will begin with an oral summary by a representative of Wetzel County Schools of the reasons and supporting data in Connection with the proposed action by the Board. Speakers will then be recognized in the order in which they registered.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

The Board will consider any written material submitted by members of the public concerning the proposals if the material, with 6 copies, is submitted to and received by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, before 12:00 p.m. on November 7, 2024, including any findings and recommendations from the local school improvement councils representing Magnolia High School and Paden City High School.

REASONS AND SUPPORTING DATA

Until the date of the first hearing, written reasons for the Superintendent's recommendations in the form of an Impact Statement and Supporting Data are available for public inspection in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, On week days between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

FINAL ACTION

The Board of Education will take formal action on the Superintendent's proposal to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School, at its meeting at the Board of Education Office, 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on November 22, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. If, due to inclement weather or other cause, the Board meeting cannot be held on the

scheduled date, the meeting will be held at the same location and time as originally scheduled, but on November 25, 2024.

Cassandra R. Porter,
Superintendent
Wetzel County Board of
Education

WC 10/23, 10/30, 11/6 #####

Classified MARKETPLACE

Wetzel Chronicle

To place an ad call: (304) 455-3300 • Fax: (304) 455-1275

Hours:
8:30-5:00 Monday-Friday • Fax: 24 hours a day/7 days a week



Classified Deadlines

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Display Ads: Noon Fri. prior to Wed. publication

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Employment

Legal Notices

AIR QUALITY PERMIT NOTICE
Notice of Open Comment Period

On September 23, 2024, EQT Production Company applied to the WV Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Air Quality (DAQ) for a permit to Modify and operate the Winters Natural Gas Compressor Station located at 2361 Schuppach Ridge Road, New Martinsville in Wetzel County, WV at latitude 39.651183 and longitude -80.811883. A preliminary evaluation has determined that all State and Federal air quality requirements will be met by the proposed modification. The DAQ is providing notice to the public of an open comment period for permit application R13-3060B.

The following potential emissions will be authorized by this permit action: Particulate Matter less than 10 microns, 0.98 tons per year (TPY); Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns, 0.94 TPY; Sulfur Dioxide, 1.31 TPY; Oxides of Nitrogen, 21.87 TPY; Carbon Monoxide, 8.35 TPY; Volatile Organic Compounds, 55.79 TPY; Total Hazardous Air Pollutants, 6.21 TPY. Written comments or requests for a public meeting must be received by the DAQ before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 22, 2024. A public meeting may be held if the Director of the DAQ determines that significant public interest has been expressed, in writing, or when the Director deems it appropriate. The purpose of the DAQ's permitting process is to make a preliminary determination if the proposed modification will meet all state and federal air quality requirements. The purpose of the public review process is to accept public comments on air quality issues relevant to this determination. Only written comments received at the address noted below within the specified time frame, or comments presented orally at a scheduled public meeting, will be considered prior to final action on the permit. All such comments will become part of the public record.

Roy F. Kees, P.E.
WV Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Air Quality
601 57th Street, SE
Charleston, WV 25304
Telephone: 304/926-0499, ext. 41269
Email: Roy.F.Kees@wv.gov

Additional information, including copies of the draft permit, application and all other supporting materials relevant to the permit decision may be obtained by contacting the engineer listed above. The draft permit and engineering evaluation can be downloaded at:
<https://dep.wv.gov/daq/permitting/Pages/NSR-Permit-Applications.aspx>

Legal Notices

16126
I have before me for settlement the following account:

Waiver of Final Settlement for the Estate of Mary Evelyn Pyles,

Given under my hand this 9th day of October, 2024, Philip J. Bowser, Esquire, Fiduciary Commissioner, County of Wetzel.

Philip J. Bowser
Fiduciary Commissioner,
Wetzel County

16121
I have before me for settlement the following account:

Waiver of Final Settlement for the Estate of Evelyn D. Poling,

Given under my hand this 9th day of October, 2024, Philip J. Bowser, Esquire, Fiduciary Commissioner, County of Wetzel.

Philip J. Bowser
Fiduciary Commissioner,
Wetzel County

16123 New Martinsville Water & Sanitary Sewer Board Public Service Announcement

As part of our regular maintenance program, the New Martinsville Water & Sewer Department will be flushing fire hydrants in the Steelton area of New Martinsville north of Williams Run beginning Monday October 21, 2024 through Friday November 1, 2024. Flushing of the middle and south end of New Martinsville south of Williams Run will begin Monday November 4, 2024 through Friday November 15, 2024.

During this time, customers may experience discolored water. If this occurs, open your cold water taps and let the until the water runs clear.

Please take care with laundry as staining may occur if the water is discolored. If you have any questions, call 455-9130 or 455-9100 after hours.

Sincerely,
William Midcap
Superintendent

16125

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF HUNDRED HIGH SCHOOL AND CONSOLIDATION INTO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
The Wetzel County Board of Education will hold two public hearings on the Superintendent's recommendation to close Hundred High School and consolidate into Valley High School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, as follows:

LOCATION: Hundred High School, 3490 Hornet Highway, Hundred, WV

Legal Notices

DATE AND TIME:
November 18, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

LOCATION: Valley High School, 44 Lumberjack Lane, Pine Grove, WV
DATE AND TIME:
November 20, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30p.m. and 6 p.m.

If, at the time a hearing is called to order, the Board determines that the location is of insufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend, the hearing will be recessed and moved to a new location of sufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend. If that happens, the new meeting location will be posted at the original meeting location.

If a public hearing is not completed by 11 p.m., it will be recessed, to be continued on a date and at a time designated and announced by the Board just prior to the hearing recess, to be continued day-to-day until concluded. The public hearings, as well as any reconvened session of the public hearings, shall end at the conclusion of each hearing's business or at 11p.m., whichever occurs earlier.

ALTERNATE DATES AND TIMES

If, due to inclement weather or other cause, any hearing cannot be held on the scheduled date, the hearing or meeting will be held at the same location as originally scheduled, but on these dates and times:

* for the hearing at Hundred High School, on November 19, 2024, beginning at 6 p.m.

*for the hearing at Valley High School, on November 21, 2024, beginning at 6 p.m.

If for any reason a hearing cannot be conducted on the alternate date or time, the Board will determine a date or time.

HEARING PROCEDURES

For a period of 30 minutes prior to the commencement of a public hearing, persons may and are encouraged to register at the hearing location for the purpose of making statements, offering testimony, and questioning school officials concerning the proposals. Each hearing will begin with an oral summary by a representative of Wetzel County Schools of the reasons and supporting data in connection with the proposed action by the Board. Speakers will then be recognized in the order in which they registered.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

The Board will consider any written material submitted by members of the public concerning the proposals if the material, with 6 copies, is submitted to and received by the Office of the

Legal Notices

Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, before 12:00 p.m. on November 7, 2024, including any findings and recommendations from the local school improvement councils representing Hundred High School and Valley High School.

REASONS AND SUPPORTING DATA

Until the date of the first hearing, written reasons for the Superintendent's recommendations in the form of an Impact Statement and Supporting Data are available for public inspection in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on week days between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

FINAL ACTION

The Board of Education will take formal action on the Superintendent's proposal to close Hundred High School and consolidate into Valley High School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, at its meeting at the Board of Education Office, 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on November 22, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. If, due to inclement weather or other cause, the Board meeting cannot be held on the scheduled date, the meeting will be held at the same location and time as originally scheduled, but on November 25, 2024.

Cassandra R. Porter,
Superintendent
Wetzel County Board of Education

16129

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Wetzel County Board of Education will hold three public hearings on the Superintendent's recommendation to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, as follows:

* LOCATION: Magnolia High School, 601 Maple Avenue,
DATE AND TIME:
November 13, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

* LOCATION: New Martinsville School, 20 East Benjamin Drive, New Martinsville, WV
DATE AND TIME:
November 14, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between 5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

* LOCATION: Paden City High School, 201 North Fourth Avenue, Paden City, WV
DATE AND TIME:
November 15, 2024, at 6 p.m.
Sign in to speak between

Legal Notices

5:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.
If, at the time a hearing is called to order, the Board determines that the location is of insufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend, the hearing will be recessed and moved to a new location of sufficient size to accommodate all those who desire to attend. If that happens, the new meeting location will be posted at the original meeting location.

If a public hearing is not completed by 11 p.m., it will be recessed, to be continued on a date and at a time designated and announced by the Board just prior to the hearing recess, to be continued ay-to-day until concluded. The public hearings, as well as any reconvened session of the public hearings, shall end at the conclusion of each hearing's business or at 11 p.m., whichever occurs earlier.

ALTERNATE DATES AND TIMES

If, due to inclement weather or other cause, any hearing cannot be held on the scheduled date, the hearing or meeting will be held at the same location as originally Scheduled, but on these dates and times:

* for the hearing at Magnolia High School, on November 14, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.

* for the hearing at New Martinsville School, on November 15, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.

* for the hearing at Paden City High School, on November 16, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.

If for any reason a hearing cannot be conducted on the alternate date or time, the Board will determine date and time.

HEARING PROCEDURES

For a period of 30 minutes prior to the commencement of a public hearing, persons may and are encouraged to register at the hearing location for the purpose of making statements, offering testimony, and questioning school officials concerning the proposals. Each hearing will begin with an oral summary by a representative of Wetzel County Schools of the reasons and supporting data in Connection with the proposed action by the Board. Speakers will then be recognized in the order in which they registered.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

The Board will consider any written material submitted by members of the public concerning the proposals if the material, with 6 copies, is submitted to and received by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, before 12:00 p.m. on November 7, 2024, including any findings and recommendations from the local school

Legal Notices

improvement councils representing Magnolia High School and Paden City High School.

REASONS AND SUPPORTING DATA

Until the date of the first hearing, written reasons for the Superintendent's recommendations in the form of an Impact Statement and Supporting data are available for public inspection in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, On week days between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

FINAL ACTION

The Board of Education will take formal action on the Superintendent's proposal to close Paden City High School and consolidate into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School, at its meeting at the Board of Education Office, 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on November 22, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. If, due to inclement weather or other cause, the Board meeting cannot be held on the scheduled date, the meeting will be held at the same location and time as originally scheduled, but on November 25, 2024.

Cassandra R. Porter,
Superintendent
Wetzel County Board of Education

16131

PUBLICATION FOR PROPOSED WV CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT - 2024 GENERAL

Class and Publication Info: Class I legal advertisement, must be placed in a newspaper in every WV county as soon as possible. There is 1 proposed Amendment, details below.

Information to be published, verbatim:

PUBLIC NOTICE: Proposed Amendment to the WV Constitution to be on the November 5, 2024, General Election Ballot.

Title of Amendment: Amendment No. 1: Protection of persons against medically assisted suicide
Summary of Purpose: "The purpose of this amendment is to protect West Virginians against medically assisted suicide."
Full Text of the Amendment: [3-23. Protection against medically assisted suicide. No person, physician, or health care provider in the State of West Virginia shall participate in the practice of medically assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing of a person. Nothing in this section prohibits the administration or prescription of medication for the purpose of alleviating pain or discomfort while the patient's condition follows its natural course; nor does anything in

WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Public Hearing Held on Nov. 15, 2024 at Paden City H.S.

DELEGATION – PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

All delegations shall hold their presentations to not more than five (5) minutes. Delegations may not discuss matters that involve student privacy, confidentiality, or matters related to specific employees. The Board president has the authority to restrict any presentation which becomes personal, abusive, or inappropriate. – WCS Policy: BDDH

Please print clearly

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ Chris McGinnis | ✓ Pura Young |
| ✓ Stacy Yoho | ✓ Shauna Williams |
| ✓ Matt Kinnaed | ✓ Tammy Johnson |
| ✓ Councilman Bill Bell | ✓ Jon Baker |
| ✓ Samantha Smith | ✓ Amanda Anderson |
| ✓ Joseph Henry | ✓ Pam Witschey |
| ✓ Michael Radabaugh | ✓ KELLY SINE |
| ✓ Izzi Anderson | ✓ JANA TURNER |
| ✓ Dalton Hayes | ✓ <u>DALZ DUDGEON</u> |
| ✓ Josh Musgrave | ✓ Joey Anderson |
| ✓ London Alexander | ✓ Malee Amos |
| ✓ Kaenn Hunt | ✓ Gracelyn Wyatt |
| ✓ Patty Wright | ✓ Becky Hayes |
| ✓ Mike Turner | ✓ Mackenzie Simpkins |
| ✓ MAYOR HOCHSTRASSER | ✓ Hannah Clark |
| ✓ Rodney McWilliams | Brady Bennett |

✓ Johann McGinnis

✓ Tiffany Hayes

— Joshua Musgrave,

✓ WELDON P WILLIAM

In The Matter Of:

*Closure of Paden City High School And Its
Consolidation Into Magnolia High School, et al.*

*Public Hearing Paden City High School
November 15, 2024*

*WV Depos
2413 East Pike Street, Suite 119
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26301*

Original File Hearing PCHS.txt

Min-U-Script® with Word Index

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WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC HEARING

RE: CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL
AND ITS CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL
AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

The following proceedings were stenographically recorded by and before Diana Baker, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of West Virginia, at Paden City High School, 201 North Fourth Avenue, Paden City, West Virginia, on Friday, November 15, 2024, beginning at 6:01 p.m.

APPEARANCES

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- Cassandra Porter, Superintendent
- Ben McPherson, Chief Personnel Officer
- Paul Huston, Secondary Education Director
- Jeff Lancaster, Treasurer
- Todd Barcus, Attendance Director/
Student Services Director
- JoBeth Simmons, Executive Secretary

- Wetzel County Board of Education Members
- Linda Fonner, President
- Brian Castilow, Vice President
- Jimmy Glasscock, Member
- Christine Nice, Member
- Christine Mitchell, Member

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PROCEEDINGS

MS. FONNER: I call this special meeting of the Wetzel County Board of Education to order. We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Castilow and followed by a moment of silence.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

(Moment of silence observed.)

MS. FONNER: You may be seated. Let the record show that all four board members are present: Mr. Glasscock, Mr. Castilow, Mrs. Fonner, Mrs. Nice, and Mrs. Mitchell. We will now have the hearing on the closure of Paden City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School. We'll have the summary of the proposed action presented by administration.

MS. PORTER: Good evening. Wetzel County Schools is at a crossroad, facing significant demographic challenges that require thoughtful consideration and strategic plan. The population of Wetzel County has declined by 16.6 percent since 2010, from 16,537 to an estimated 13,786 in 2024, outpacing both the national growth rate of 7.7 percent and the 4.3 percent decline seen in West Virginia. Correspondingly, student enrollment in Wetzel County has

1 dropped by approximately 800 students over the same time
2 period, placing pressure on our schools and their
3 ability to provide a robust educational experience for
4 all students.

5 Magnolia High School and Paden City High
6 School, both located in riverfront communities in Wetzel
7 County, together accounting for about two-thirds of the
8 county's total student enrollment. Over the last
9 decade, both schools have experienced substantial
10 declines in enrollment. Magnolia High School, which
11 served 420 students in 2014, has seen that number drop
12 to 303 students in the '23-'24 school year. Similarly,
13 Paden City High School, which had 127 students in grades
14 9 through 12 ten years ago, is down to just 107. This
15 ongoing enrollment decline reflected in the '24-'25
16 school year figures, 286 students at Magnolia and 96 at
17 Paden City, has led to the proposal to consolidate these
18 schools and integrate the 7th and 8th grades into New
19 Martinsville School. The consolidation is a proactive
20 response to the diminishing student population and
21 underutilized facilities. New Martinsville School,
22 while also experiencing fluctuations in enrollment, has
23 significant unused capacity and will absorb the
24 additional students from Paden City without surpassing

1 its capacity of 1,309 students.

2 When it comes to the physical infrastructure
3 of our schools, the need for upgrades is clear.
4 Magnolia High School, with its size and better
5 facilities, requires approximately 16.6 million in
6 improvements, including HVAC upgrades and enhancement to
7 the athletic facilities. In contrast, Paden City High
8 School, with its more limited site, would require
9 7.5 million in renovations to meet even basic standards.
10 However, the small size of Paden City's campus and its
11 limited room for expansion to make it unsustainable
12 long-term option -- I'm sorry -- makes it an
13 unsustainable long-term option. Magnolia's larger, more
14 versatile campus, with necessary improvements, provides
15 a stronger foundation for meeting educational needs.

16 From a financial standpoint, the proposed
17 consolidation offers savings. Wetzel County Schools
18 anticipates the average savings of \$358,722 primarily
19 from reduced utility and maintenance costs at the closed
20 Paden City High School. While staffing levels will
21 remain unchanged across both professional and service
22 personnel, operational costs will be optimized through
23 this consolidation, ensuring more efficient use of our
24 resources. The restructuring will allow the county to

1 better allocate funds, ensuring the continued
2 sustainability of Magnolia High School and addressing
3 financial insufficiencies tied to underenrolled
4 students -- schools.

5 A key benefit of this consolidation is that it
6 will not result in job losses. Teachers particularly
7 will benefit from reduced class preparation burdens,
8 allowing them to focus on future -- fewer courses and
9 offer a broader array of electives. This also allows
10 for more efficient scheduling, leading to a more diverse
11 and robust educational program. Any minimal staff
12 reduction will occur gradually through attrition,
13 ensuring a smooth transition.

14 In terms of student transportation, the
15 proposed changes will result in manageable adjustments.
16 While some students will experience slightly longer
17 travel times, approximately 15 extra minutes for those
18 from Paden City, these increases are within acceptable
19 limits. A new bus route will be developed to ensure
20 that all students are transported safely and efficiently
21 to the new consolidated school without a waiver --
22 excuse me -- without a need for waivers. These changes
23 aim to improve operational efficiency while maintaining
24 student safety and convenience.

1 Academically, Wetzel County Schools is
2 committed to providing high-quality education that meets
3 the needs of all students, in alignment with the
4 federal, state, and local regulations.

5 By consolidating Paden City High School into
6 Magnolia High School and integrating the 7th and 8th
7 grade into New Martinsville School, the district will be
8 positioned to offer enhanced educational opportunities
9 for all students. This move is in full compliance with
10 policies such as 2419, 2510, 2520 which ensure that
11 students receive a comprehensive, standards-based
12 education. The consolidation also aligns with Policy
13 6200 and 6204 which are designed to improve educational
14 efficiency and equity.

15 Finally, it is important to recognize the
16 impact on the community served by these schools. Paden
17 City High School and Magnolia High School are central to
18 their respective communities, providing more than just
19 educational services. They are also hubs for social
20 activities and community events. The closure of Paden
21 City High School could affect these vital community
22 connections, making it more difficult to attract
23 families to the area. However, the consolidation of
24 Paden City High School into Magnolia High School offers

1 an opportunity to build new community relationships and
2 strengthen support for the county's educational system.
3 By consolidating resources and expanding the scope of
4 programs available, Wetzel County can cultivate new
5 partnerships that will benefit both students and the
6 broader community.

7 In conclusion, the proposed consolidation of
8 Paden City and Magnolia High Schools represents a
9 strategic and necessary step for Wetzel County Schools.
10 It is an opportunity to address declining enrollment,
11 improve facilities, and optimize financial resources,
12 maintain high-quality educational opportunities for all
13 students. The consolidation will better position Wetzel
14 County for future, ensuring sustainabilities of our
15 schools, and the continued success of our students.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. FONNER: We will now have the
18 delegations and public comment section of this meeting.
19 In accordance with West Virginia Policy 6204 and Wetzel
20 County Policy BDDH, each speaker will be allotted a
21 maximum of five minutes to present the remarks. This
22 policy ensures that all individuals have equal
23 opportunity to address the board in a fair and timely
24 manner. During the five-minute speaking period, any

1 questions or clarifications raised by the speaker will
2 not be addressed immediately. Instead, in accordance
3 with Policy 6204 3.4.a.8, all questions will be answered
4 at the conclusion of the speaker's allotted time. This
5 structure helps maintain order and ensures that each
6 speaker has the full opportunity to present their views
7 without interruption and that they are able to use the
8 entire 5 minutes they are entitled to. We ask that all
9 participants respect this time limitation to facilitate
10 an orderly and efficient meeting. Again, each person
11 will have up to five minutes to speak. We ask that we
12 all remain respectful. Board members may not respond to
13 the delegations. All comments are to be made to the
14 board, but not to the audience. Comments are not to be
15 of a personal nature. We do not want to defame anyone.
16 The board is not responsible for the speaker's comments.
17 The speakers are responsible for their comments. And
18 the board president has the authority to maintain order
19 at all meetings.

20 Our first person to speak will be Chris
21 McGinnis.

22 CHRIS MCGINNIS: Hello. What a year and
23 a half it's been; right?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chris, turn on the

1 mic, please.

2 CHRIS MCGINNIS: Oh, does it need to be
3 turned on?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry.

5 CHRIS MCGINNIS: Not a problem.

6 As I said, what a year and a half it's been.
7 We're all exhausted. I'm sure you guys are too. I'm
8 sure you'll be glad when these hearings are over. To an
9 extent, we will too. But I ask you tonight, I know
10 you're tired and you probably came down here knowing you
11 were going to hear a lot of speakers and prepared to
12 kind of steel yourself against the barrage that's
13 coming. Everybody knows how it's going to be in Paden
14 City, I'm sure. But I ask you tonight to keep an open
15 mind, to not be steeled against these things, but to
16 actually be sensitive to them and to consider them. I'm
17 sure in your mind you've thought these things over;
18 you've made your mind up to an extent. Let us give you
19 some facts and honestly consider them. Allow your minds
20 the possibility to be changed. I'm certain that you
21 will. Now, hang on because I have to talk fast.

22 First off, I believe we started the night with
23 a good basis for what I'd like to speak to which are
24 certain misrepresentations -- the word "lies" might be

1 inflammatory, but it may be classified as that -- for
2 instance, the very reason that we were told that there
3 was an urgency for this act, to get it done by next
4 year, and I've even heard the board members echo those
5 sentiments in, you know, private, was the teacher
6 shortage, the crisis. And yet that wasn't brought up in
7 the statement to start things. The reasons that were
8 given -- actually, the words were "has led to this
9 proposal." What came before it was "population decline"
10 and "student enrollment." That's not an emergency to
11 get this done next year as it was stated. So that was
12 kind of a misrepresentation. We had all the water
13 bottles, remember, all the positions, and I believe
14 maybe that went away because the fact is if you limit it
15 down to what we're really doing, which involves high
16 schools, not elementary or middle schools -- Paden City
17 Middle School, but that's another topic -- the shortage
18 is really at that level. It's not at core class high
19 school levels. I'm not going to ask a question about
20 it. I'm sure somebody will later. But I'd just like to
21 present some other things. At the 10/4 special
22 meeting -- 10/14 special meeting -- I'm sorry --
23 Ms. Mitchell said, "The majority of community members
24 want a centrally located high school. In these two

1 impact statements, I don't see anything referencing the
2 final goal. What are our assurances? You tell me your
3 final goal is a consolidated school for the entire
4 county."

5 Ms. Porter's response -- and I've taken out
6 some things just to make it quicker -- she basically
7 said, "When we had our work session, we talked about a
8 lot of things. Four schools to two schools and then
9 consolidate into one." She said, "We've looked at
10 pieces of property. We'd have to find land. I know
11 there's talk about why we're going to consolidate and
12 change colors," she said. "That part would have to be
13 voted on. Nothing is 100 percent. But if we can find a
14 plot of land," and she went on. She ended with "as far
15 as the colors, we'll have to figure out what to do about
16 that."

17 Again, when discussing the colors and
18 rebranding, Mr. Glasscock asked if it was financially
19 responsible to go through this rebranding just to do it
20 again in a few years. And, again, the response was
21 "We're not voting on that. We'll have to make a
22 decision on it." Make a decision? The whole premise of
23 this beyond the teacher crisis, which we've already
24 given up on, apparently, was this is not a merger. It's

1 a consolidation, and it's a consolidation because we're
2 going to get rid of the school colors and mascots and
3 it's all going to be new and then we're going to go to
4 one school eventually. And a lot of people are on board
5 for it. Even people in Paden City, a lot of them are
6 fine with the idea of one school. You'd really not get
7 a ton of blow-back on that, I don't think. But the
8 problem is, is we wanted to sell this as that and then
9 go to a primary step where there is zero guarantees, but
10 once we get this primary step in, then we can discuss
11 it. The whole premise was that it would not be any kind
12 of a merger. The entire basis was to make things fair
13 for all students in all attendance areas. Well, I think
14 even the temporary plan with rebranding fails after
15 Paden City and Hundred, now that's even become we'll
16 have to make a decision on that, we'll have to figure
17 out what to do with that. What we have here is a
18 classic bait and switch, a sales tactic to get someone
19 to do what you want by promising something different
20 than what you're ultimately probably going to deliver.
21 It's a good time to bring up the history that the board
22 seems to either be forgetting or choosing to ignore or
23 it's just been drawn out so long probably it's just not
24 in the front of your mind anymore, so let me bring it

1 up. This is tactic number three in trying to shut down
2 Paden City High School or merge it into Magnolia High
3 School. The first attempt began about three days into
4 Mrs. Porter's employment here, and it was argued
5 basically as a common-sense decision. The board didn't
6 even see a need to vote on it. There was no support for
7 it. And, yet, at the very next meeting, Ms. Porter
8 brought it up a second time. So the board said, All
9 right. We'll vote on it. Ended up being a 5-0 vote. I
10 know the membership has changed, so maybe the vote
11 wouldn't be the same today. I don't know. But at least
12 then the vote forced that decision to be abided by.

13 Well, then tactic two was there's an imminent
14 danger at Paden City High School. Well, we took that to
15 court and found that to be not true either. It was a
16 unilateral decision. Ultimately, the court decided that
17 Ms. Porter had permitted an illegal closure of the
18 school. How an employee commits an illegal act in the
19 execution of their job and is not disciplined in any way
20 I'll never understand. But, anyway, tactic one failed.
21 Tactic two failed. Now we have tactic three. We're
22 including some other people, but it was sold to you as a
23 definite rebranding and consolidation. And now all the
24 things that you were promised are a maybe, if, we'll

1 decide on it that later. Nothing's guaranteed. And
2 you're leaving that decision in the hands of somebody
3 that the court has proven can't be trusted.

4 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker will be Stacey Yoho.

6 STACEY YOHO: Good evening. Attrition.

7 As a former business owner, I clearly understand the
8 definition of attrition as it applies to business.

9 Attrition is also defined as the process of reducing

10 something's strength or effectiveness through sustained
11 attack or pressure. Forgive me, but the past two years

12 have led myself and others to believe that the term

13 "attrition" is being used in both terms. I go back to

14 the idea from the West Virginia Standards for Effective
15 Schools, a clear and focused mission. This also guides

16 our county. We have yet to understand a clear and

17 focused mission. When Ms. Porter arrived, we

18 immediately went to all that Mr. McGinnis just led you

19 through. Merging the schools with little explanation.

20 Then shortly after the board voted that down, we were

21 told that year by Ms. Porter that there will be tears

22 come RIF and transfer time. Then we fast-forward to the

23 illegal closure of this school. I'm not going to

24 revisit those details because the damage from that is

1 something that we still deal with daily.

2 Now here we are again, this time with an
3 emergency staffing crisis, which leads me to my list of
4 questions. What caused the lack of staff at Paden City
5 High School? Did you do exit interviews and follow-ups
6 as you said you would? And how can you guarantee that
7 teachers will want to remain employed here and not find
8 other jobs? Do we currently have certified staff
9 working in noncertified -- or nonteaching positions?

10 Today, we sit here again with a new narrative:
11 Attendance, underutilized facilities, upgrading
12 athletics facilities, and savings. Then there's that
13 pesky formula that will come back into the picture
14 resulting in more attrition, RIFs, and transfers, though
15 the State Department itself says it's flawed and doesn't
16 understand it. I remember being at Magnolia when the
17 amount of teachers there, Mr. Castilow himself, had --
18 we had students of about 500. There won't be that many
19 students at this school, so how many teachers -- this is
20 another question -- how many teachers do you truly need?
21 And the biggest question that I have that I would like
22 answered is how do we trust you? With no clear and
23 focused mission, you have divided communities. You
24 state that Wetzel County is our community, and, yes, it

1 is, comprised of four communities, two of which you have
2 treated as if they do not matter. The schools and
3 people in them have been treated differently, as if they
4 do not matter. How do we trust that you will keep your
5 word? When this process began, you were to meet with
6 all of us and discuss this process. Did you do that?
7 And if not, why? How do we trust that you will make
8 equitable decisions when key people like our principals
9 work sessions and meetings?

10 Finally, Number 7, the Standards for Effective
11 Schools for the State of West Virginia discusses family
12 and community partnerships. While some say it is not
13 your responsibility to be loyal to the communities, I
14 disagree. It is the board and the county office's
15 responsibility to remember where these children come
16 from. You have torn this community, Wetzel County,
17 apart. The communities foster the children that attend
18 your schools. Partnerships must exist between the
19 schools and communities to support academic, social and
20 emotional, and the physical needs of our students. How
21 do you intend to repair the damage that you have done to
22 these communities in order to make your effort
23 successful? It once was common for teachers to work
24 between both schools, part-time Magnolia, part-time at

1 Paden City. Why is that not happening now? Especially
2 when we have some teachers that are certified in
3 nonteaching positions. You just stated that this was a
4 proactive measure to address these issues that you bring
5 to the table. There are alternative methods to address
6 what you have presented, and we don't have to wait, or
7 while we are waiting, but now my question shifts.

8 Explain the long-term option that you stated
9 when we got here in your just -- in your statement.
10 What is the long-term option? Is it Magnolia High
11 School? Or is it one school for the entire county? I'm
12 sorry, but it appears that it is Magnolia High School.
13 Students in Magnolia and Valley are already working on
14 consolidation colors, at least Valley specifically has
15 already had their committees put together. These
16 students have been treated unfairly. Reset this path.
17 Make this an equitable move, one move for every person.
18 We are asking you today to please find a new way to do
19 this. Find the ground, build a school, but make it
20 equitable for everyone.

21 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

22 MR. MCPHERSON: Can you hear me?

23 STACEY YOHO: No.

24 MR. MCPHERSON: I need turned up. Okay.

1 That's much better.

2 I'm going to answer some of these staffing
3 questions.

4 STACEY YOHO: Okay.

5 MR. MCPHERSON: So do we do exit
6 interviews right now? We don't. And some of that is
7 because we've definitely had people resign at 10:30 at
8 night and not come to work the next day. It's hard to
9 interview somebody when they leave when you're in bed.

10 How do we keep people? The board has done
11 some proactive things to keep people around. And I can
12 say, from going to job fairs and things like that, that
13 they do help. Our pay scale is very good. It hurts us
14 that we are surrounded by other counties where the pay
15 scale is also equally good. If we were an island, it
16 would be a whole lot easier.

17 As far as folks at the secondary level who we
18 don't have filled with certified teachers right now,
19 it's -- in the secondary world, it's close to ten, give
20 or take. We have some folks on alternative
21 certification.

22 STACEY YOHO: It was just two at Magnolia
23 is what you said, at Magnolia High School; correct?

24 MR. MCPHERSON: It's one. I'm talking

1 all of secondary right now.

2 STACEY YOHO: I'm just talking about
3 these two schools right now because that's what we're
4 here for.

5 MR. MCPHERSON: These two schools right
6 now? Okay. You've got about five.

7 STACEY YOHO: Five.

8 MR. MCPHERSON: When I look at my entire
9 secondary, I have some, and I can't say anything yet
10 because these people haven't made any official moves,
11 but I fear we're going to need a couple more at a couple
12 other schools before the semester is over that I'm
13 concerned about. And we also have some -- you know, we
14 fill some of these with virtual folks, which is not what
15 we want to do, but we've had no choice as far as that
16 goes.

17 STACEY YOHO: Did we look at the options,
18 though? That didn't quite answer my question. Do we
19 have teachers that have -- hold secondary certifications
20 working in nonteaching positions?

21 MR. MCPHERSON: I'm sure we do, but you
22 realize that I can't force somebody to take a job;
23 right?

24 STACEY YOHO: But we can -- but can we

1 eliminate positions that are unnecessary and not
2 required by the State of West Virginia?

3 MR. MCPHERSON: You can always do that,
4 but then those folks have to bid on jobs. Keep in mind
5 that you cannot transfer somebody into a vacancy. It's
6 illegal, which --

7 STACEY YOHO: That makes sense, but I --

8 MR. MCPHERSON: I don't know if it makes
9 sense. I wish it was another way that was easier.

10 STACEY YOHO: It doesn't make sense
11 policywise, but --

12 MR. MCPHERSON: But it's the law.

13 STACEY YOHO: But in the law-wise, but --

14 MR. MCPHERSON: It's the law. So the
15 answer is that, yes, but if those folks don't bid on
16 jobs, it doesn't help us.

17 And then, you know, I'm going to speak to the
18 long-term option because I've been involved in it quite
19 a bit. I feel there is a commitment to moving to one
20 school. I will say that I never would have dreamed that
21 part of my job would be exploring land in a side-by-side
22 with a superintendent of schools and a realtor and a
23 landowner. That kind of stuff happened. So there's
24 been some active looking to actually look at what one

1 school would look like and what we could do for our
2 students. So I feel that's an actual thing that's
3 happening.

4 I have a 7th grader, and I have a lot of hope
5 that that 7th grader will graduate from a one high
6 school in Wetzel County Schools.

7 STACEY YOHO: With the long-term option,
8 I don't know that that really clarified a whole lot,
9 because there's been a lot of rumors, I guess, that
10 nobody at this level has been able to lay to rest. We
11 are just looking; however, in the -- in the beginning,
12 what you just stated was that -- that the long-term
13 sustainable school is Magnolia High School. Is that
14 what you are looking at as the long-term sustainable
15 school right now?

16 MR. MCPHERSON: So as far as that impact
17 statement goes, for a couple years, to get us through to
18 a new school, that's what that means. But I feel that's
19 a very huge commitment to one school.

20 STACEY YOHO: That's not what that says,
21 though. This goes back to the trust. So can we go back
22 to that question? How do we trust you? It's fair. I'm
23 not talking to you, Ben.

24 MR. MCPHERSON: Okay. Well...

1 MS. PORTER: I know that I did not grow
2 up in this community; however, I did grow up in the West
3 Virginia panhandle, and for the last 31 years, I've
4 dedicated my life to doing what is right for students.
5 I know that this is not hugely popular, but I do know
6 that we do need to make some change and we need to look
7 forward to the future. Today, today, I went out and
8 looked at land. I have to find the right piece --
9 actually, we need to find the right piece and then bring
10 it to the board to move forward. I would love nothing
11 more than during my tenure to find land and start the
12 building process for our students in Wetzel County. And
13 I know that you're talking about trust and I know that
14 we can swing things different ways, but I'm telling you
15 that I want nothing more than to have one facility that
16 serves all of the students, all of their needs. We
17 currently don't even have a track for our students in
18 Wetzel County. There are a lot of things that your
19 students, your children deserve.

20 STACEY YOHO: I don't know that that
21 answers the question. How do you intend to repair the
22 damage that you've done to these communities? Because I
23 think you can agree that there's a -- you've referred to
24 Wetzel County Schools as the community. You have said

1 that. How do we repair the damage to this county? How
2 do we repair the damage to this county? How do we
3 repair this? How do you repair this as a school?
4 Because West Virginia, like I just said, the standards
5 for effective schools are these partnerships. How --
6 what is your plan to correct it?

7 MS. PORTER: So, unfortunately, we have
8 people on both sides of the fence, and I am working very
9 hard to make sure that we do what is best for all of the
10 kids. The trust will have to be built as we go, and
11 you'll have to trust the process as we go through this.
12 And we are working as a team. This is not just a
13 one-person show. This is a lot of people spending a lot
14 of time working to make sure we do the best for our
15 students in Wetzel County. I can't give you a
16 definitive answer. Trust is something that I'm going to
17 have to earn from you, obviously.

18 STACEY YOHO: Yes. Back to the trust,
19 one of the questions that I asked was when we began this
20 process, you all said that you were going to meet with
21 the staff at every single school and discuss with us
22 what this would look like before we came into here. The
23 board members asked for that. Did you do that?

24 MS. PORTER: I have met with many, many

1 staff and teachers --

2 STACEY YOHO: Did you meet with the staff
3 specifically regarding this issue like you said you
4 would at the work session?

5 MS. PORTER: I have. I may not have --

6 STACEY YOHO: You did not at Paden City
7 High School.

8 MS. PORTER: Okay. I'm sorry.

9 STACEY YOHO: I'm done.

10 MS. FONNER: The next speaker is Matt
11 Kinnard. And I do ask the audience, you do need to
12 remain quiet so that we can hear the questions and
13 answers too.

14 MATT KINNARD: Good evening. As a
15 35-year teacher veteran, 20 in Wetzel County, serving
16 under nine superintendents, each with a different plan
17 and agenda, as a parent of students who graduated from a
18 consolidated high school in Tyler County, I can tell
19 you, having witnessed firsthand, how my children were
20 impacted as an outsider at Tyler County. The life
21 lessons that they learned, though my wife has been a
22 resident of Tyler County, a graduate of Sistersville
23 High School, and having coached at Tyler for 15 years,
24 it was a life lesson I wish my children had never had.

1 The things they were forced to deal with as an outsider
2 has impacted them to the point that none of my three
3 children will attend any event at Tyler Consolidated.
4 That's unfortunate. Because what that says to me is
5 though this was in the best interest of Tyler County to
6 shut down Sistersville and Middlebourne and create a
7 consolidated school, many things have not healed, the
8 community has not truly improved, and had it not been
9 for gas and oil money, which we have been told multiple
10 times can not be relied on for future staffing and for
11 other things within this county, Tyler would not have
12 what it has today. My children did not have any of the
13 special advantages that we have talked about within this
14 county that Tyler now offers.

15 So having said all of that and thinking about
16 these things, when we talk about consolidation, we need
17 to be reminded of the goals that the State has, 3 and 4,
18 about we are to prepare our students, and our teachers
19 need to be improving individually to do our job better.
20 I can tell you that the only way that's going to happen
21 is to change the morale in this community. And by
22 community, I mean our teaching staff. Since '22-'23
23 school year, our teacher absenteeism has increased by
24 30 percent. That is an astronomical number that should

1 not happen. Sitting on our board is a person who I know
2 well and remember when she retired because of the
3 resign, relocate, or retire phrase if you didn't buy
4 into what was being presented. We've had nine teachers
5 leave Paden City, and I did have not exit interviews,
6 but conversations with each of them because I am the
7 last one left from the original group when Warren Grace
8 was principal here. Each one of them made the statement
9 "I would love to stay in Paden City, but there is no job
10 security there." Mrs. Miller, one of our former
11 principals, even apologized to our staff as she said, "I
12 am returning to Magnolia to make sure I have a job."
13 That's wrong. Plain and simple. It's wrong when I'm
14 working in my yard and my daughter calls to say, "Dad,
15 what are you going to do for a job next year?" And I'm,
16 like, "What are you talking about?" "Paden City has
17 just been shut down."

18 As a teacher and an educator, I would hope
19 that we can be respected on a higher level, so that
20 brings me to the following questions: Since there have
21 been no staff meetings led by a county administrator in
22 Paden City since September 22nd of 2023 when we were
23 told that everything would be transparent, and I heard
24 that exact same phrase again last summer, how often can

1 we expect to have meetings in the future with the staff
2 that are affected moving forward in a decision-making
3 process or will we have a voice? That's Question 1.

4 Question 2: How can the continued current or
5 lack of transparency and ability to build confidence
6 with staff and a lack of effort to correct the low
7 morale be rectified and what plans can be put in place
8 to build that trust with teachers, children, and parents
9 within the community?

10 Question 3: When will this start and how will
11 it be implemented?

12 MS. FONNER: Questions are done. Would
13 you like to speak to those questions?

14 MS. PORTER: Sure. How often can we
15 expect to have meetings with the staff in the future? A
16 lot. Because we're going to have to come up,
17 systematically, together with Magnolia staff and Paden
18 City High School staff.

19 As to the classes that people are most
20 certified to teach, lessening the burden so they don't
21 have to teach all of one curriculum to all students and
22 all grade levels, so that is going to have to be a team
23 effort. We've already actually told our principals to
24 do preliminary looks at their staff to make sure what

1 they need. I actually talked with a staff member today
2 in hopes that this person will go ahead and take the AP
3 course testing so that AP chemistry can be taught next
4 year, and we also looked at, as well as that, looking at
5 biology and some of the math classes that we need. So
6 those questions do need to happen, those meetings do
7 need to happen, because we need to make sure we have the
8 right personnel in front of our students that best serve
9 them.

10 How can continued lack of transparency and
11 build trust? Trust is something that I'm going to have
12 to build with a lot of people. And I don't take that
13 lightly, and I know that that needs to be something that
14 I need to work towards. Transparency-wise, I am also
15 working on making sure that I'm as transparent as
16 possible. We have tried to come up with different ways
17 to make sure we're getting our message out and make sure
18 all of our documentation is available. We have answered
19 all FOIA requests and gotten the information out there.
20 So I continue to work on that, and I continue to want to
21 work on building your trust. Thank you.

22 MATT KINNARD: Okay. What about the part
23 about correcting the low morale within our staff?
24 Because it's not just Paden City. It's the staff across

1 the county. I mean, we've lost how many teachers across
2 the county?

3 MS. PORTER: So this year our whole kind
4 of premise was transforming our challenges into
5 successes. So we started out the year with Ruby Payne,
6 having a speaker come in to help us. We've got some
7 book studies. We have our directors working on
8 different items. We know that it's hard. We know that
9 teaching is very difficult. We know the burden on our
10 teachers is extreme. It's not just here in Wetzel
11 County. It's in the entire state of West Virginia.
12 It's in the entire nation. I just picked up a book
13 today from Mr. Huston, How Do We Stay in the Teaching
14 Process When We're Done Teaching? So this is something
15 that we do need to work on. Last year we were able to
16 give a spring bonus and also a significant raise to our
17 teachers. We do keep that in mind. As Mr. McPherson
18 said, we do offer a very competitive raise as well as
19 some fringe benefits for our faculty and staff. We meet
20 with our principals regularly. I just had about an
21 hour-and-20-minute conversation with a principal
22 yesterday on things that we can do to help improve and
23 appreciate the people and the hard work that they do for
24 us each and every day. Teaching is hard. It was hard

1 30 years ago. It's even tougher today. When I work
2 with our special ed director, Michelle Hogan, we talk
3 extensively on making sure that the students that have
4 behaviors, because we're seeing a lot more of that in
5 our schools at this time, making sure that we can
6 implement programming properly to make sure that all of
7 our students are getting what they need. So we are
8 continuing to work on different avenues to help work on
9 support.

10 We also just implemented a team of core lead
11 teachers throughout all the programmatic levels. We met
12 with them, Mr. Huston, Mrs. Chambers, and I met with
13 them, and we talked about things that they need, and
14 they're going to be a liaison link to our central office
15 and our schools.

16 MATT KINNARD: Okay. That's not exactly
17 what I was asking, but I understand that you've answered
18 it as you can.

19 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

20 Our next speaker is Councilman Bill Bell.

21 BILL BELL: Thank you, Madam President.
22 Per West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2322, as
23 chair of the Local School Improvement Council for Paden
24 City High School, it is my duty to give you the response

1 to the impact statement.

2 To be frank, Local School Improvement Council
3 at Paden City High School hereby rejects and refutes the
4 impact statements' supporting data provided by the
5 Wetzel County Board of Education for the following
6 reasons: Number one, this consolidation was initiated
7 in an illegal fashion under the false pretense of
8 student safety and environmental concerns. The proposed
9 closure was overturned by the Second Circuit Court of
10 West Virginia in August 2024. This consolidation is
11 politically motivated by current county administration
12 and financially influential county residents and is seen
13 as a, quote, cost-saving measure. It is cited on page 5
14 of the impact statement that the closure would save the
15 county approximately \$358,722 per year. This is only a
16 small fraction of the budget for the entire county. As
17 a comparison, Magnolia High School cost \$5.3 million
18 annually to operate and New Martinsville School cost
19 \$12.8 million found on page 16 of the document.

20 Number two, those opposing the consolidation,
21 including myself, have been retaliated against in an
22 illegal fashion. No less than five employees of Wetzel
23 County Schools have been released from their
24 responsibilities, reprimanded, or denied advancements or

1 additional compensated opportunities as a direct result
2 of their advocacy. This demonstrates the Wetzel County
3 Board of Education intention is to silence critics and
4 push the consolidation agenda.

5 Number three, the professional educator
6 shortage is not a direct result of community schools
7 being spread thin. Instead, the LSIC finds the employee
8 culture is, to be frank, toxic and abusive, thus causing
9 employees to leave or detract potential employees from
10 applying for positions. We find that a change in
11 county-level administration will alleviate and address
12 the specific concern.

13 Number four, there are a number of errors or
14 concerning statements in this document. Some but not
15 all included on page 20, no staff are proposed to go to
16 New Martinsville School in 7th and 8th grade student
17 population. On page 18, the costs incurred to New
18 Martinsville School would increase with a merge of the
19 7th and 8th grade population as opposed to documents
20 saying on page 18 once again being unchanged. It does
21 not take 58 minutes to drive five-minute miles on a
22 school bus, even with stops in place. And, finally,
23 bring the schools together would not, quote, foster a
24 stronger sense of unity and shared purpose as noted on

1 page 27. There have been documented cases of harassment
2 by students and adults toward others of opposing views
3 and communities.

4 This county has been irreparably damaged and
5 divided for this reason.

6 Therefore, the official recommendations of the
7 Paden City High School LSIC are to, one, terminate any
8 action leading to the closure of Paden City High School
9 at this time; two, terminate any action leading to the
10 closure of Hundred High School at this time; three, we
11 call on the West Virginia Board of Education to
12 investigate and analyze employee climate and morale,
13 thus addressing vacancy issues; four, consider allowing
14 teachers on a voluntary or compensatory basis -- I'm
15 sorry -- to split their duties between multiple schools
16 when teaching in certified areas. This practice is
17 currently in place on a limited basis at this time but
18 can be voted on if enough educators are willing do this;
19 five, engage directly with local colleges to recruit
20 teachers into a career with Wetzel County Schools.
21 Teacher residency programs can allow students to
22 complete student teaching obligations while promoting
23 the benefits of working with the school district.

24 My previous colleagues have asked questions

1 that, frankly, I was intending to ask, so I will defer
2 my time to the students and community members who wish
3 to speak. I thank you.

4 MS. FONNER: Thank you, Mr. Bell.

5 The next delegation is Samantha Smith.

6 SAMANTHA SMITH: Good evening. My name
7 is Samantha Smith, and I have been teaching English at
8 Paden City High School for six years. Altogether I have
9 been a teacher for 12 years. And I can honestly say
10 that my years as an educator in Paden City High School
11 have been the best of my career. I know that you are
12 not interested in the difficulties that our students
13 have faced over the last few years while we have dealt
14 with the fallout from this board office and board
15 members discussing consolidation. I know you are not
16 concerned in hearing about how many students have
17 struggled with depression because they don't want to be
18 pulled away from where they feel welcomed and accepted.
19 You probably do not want to hear about how many of our
20 students consistently say they enjoy coming to school
21 here because the students and staff are positive,
22 encouraging, and caring. Most likely, it will not
23 interest you to know we have a number of students that
24 have attended school in other places before, and they

1 state they feel more confident about themselves and are
2 respected more as individuals here at Paden City High
3 School.

4 My students are making great in and
5 identifying literary elements, using vocabulary,
6 composing well-thought-out writing. I've been able to
7 see growth in all of my students, and I am fully
8 confident that I will continue to see them grow and
9 progress this year. I can say this of all of the
10 classes where I teach. I can see many of my high school
11 students developing their writing past that of high
12 school into college level composition. I also see many
13 of these high school students making deep and thoughtful
14 connections with the text that we read. These students
15 are able to learn and progress in this way because we
16 are teaching them. However, of course, you don't care
17 about the progress or the great things they have done so
18 far this year or in previous years. You don't find it
19 important to consider how they've strived to reach this
20 point. The faculty and staff here pour their blood,
21 sweat, and tears into these students' lives and school
22 careers, but that will probably not be interesting to
23 you either. It is quite unfortunate that you do appear
24 interested in everything that applies to the growth and

1 health of our students. Maybe if you showed more
2 interest in these regards, then we would not be here
3 today having this meeting. Maybe if you thought more
4 about what these students are actually saying instead of
5 what some businesses or individuals in certain areas of
6 the county want, then we could focus on educating
7 individuals for success and encouraging their mental and
8 emotional wellness. Thank you for allowing me to speak.
9 As a wise man once told me, "Go Cats."

10 MS. FONNER: Our next speaker is Joseph
11 Henry.

12 JOSEPH HENRY: Hello. I am a student at
13 Paden City High School, and I hope to whatever God you
14 believe in, if any at all, that you listen to myself and
15 every other student that comes after me. But I have
16 been going to this school for a little over or under
17 12 years now and for the first time that I have been in
18 this town, I have gone into our museum and saw all the
19 history that you wish to take away, all the tradition,
20 all the culture. And I personally find that to be a
21 disgrace because one of the main points that people are
22 supposed to do in the present is not only to protect
23 that, but to push forward to the future, especially with
24 children. And I have seen the exact opposite happen

1 here with the board, with our superintendent, and with a
2 handful of other people. And that's not how this should
3 be. We should be pushing for students to feel safe, we
4 should be pushing for them to feel that they can get a
5 proper education in where they are going. Because I
6 don't think that you can get a proper education if you
7 want to send us to a consolidated school where you lose
8 your name and you get a number. Because I have teachers
9 in my school that I have never been in the classroom
10 with that know my name. They know me. They will come
11 and talk to me every day, see how I am doing. You can't
12 do that if you've got 30, 40 kids in a classroom,
13 because some of those students aren't going to be able
14 to get the help they need, and that's not how it should
15 be. I've said that a lot.

16 But I will get into my questions, which are,
17 unfortunately, all directed at Ms. Porter and not at the
18 board, which is why did you decide to run in this county
19 when you do not live here? Because that's a question
20 I've had.

21 Why is it that our last principal, Nicole
22 Shipman, and you both have a previous connection with
23 working at John Marshall?

24 And have you come up with any plan, if this

1 does go through, to mitigate bullying, the possibilities
2 of suicide, and harassment?

3 That is all.

4 MS. PORTER: As I previously stated --
5 and thank you for speaking. That gives a lot of courage
6 for you doing that. I'm a lifelong West Virginian, so I
7 have worked in different counties in West Virginia, as
8 do many people and many colleagues, so when I saw the
9 opportunity to make a difference in Wetzel County, I
10 decided to apply and interviewed for this job because I
11 felt like I could make a difference for you.

12 My connection with Nicole Shipman is not
13 relevant for this hearing.

14 And mitigating bullying and harassment, we
15 work every single day with our principals and our
16 teachers to make sure that we have systems in place such
17 as social workers, CIS people in each district, guidance
18 counselors to make sure that we keep on top of that as
19 much as we can. We do like to keep that open
20 communication with our students. And as you said, this
21 is a small school and we would remain a small school
22 after the consolidation. Thank you.

23 JOSEPH HENRY: Thank you.

24 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Our next speaker

1 is Michael Radabaugh.

2 MICHAEL RADABAUGH: Good evening. My
3 name is Michael Radabaugh. I am, obviously, a student
4 of Paden City High School. Honestly, I would just like
5 to jump straight into a few questions along with a few
6 statements. My first question is kind of mixed with a
7 statement. I have -- I also recently went down to the
8 museum of Paden City. I saw the history we have, and I
9 also would like to acknowledge, the history that
10 Magnolia High School has. Each school and each
11 community is known for having their own unique history.
12 I would like to know how you plan to protect this
13 history as well as also creating new history at a new
14 school.

15 Second question, my classmate also asked it,
16 but how do you plan to address the mental health crises
17 that has been started due to the actions of board has
18 taken regarding Paden City High School and Magnolia as a
19 merger? I mainly would like to point to the board's
20 indecisiveness when it came to closing Paden City. It
21 was open. It wasn't. It was open. It wasn't. You
22 have went back and forth on the matter. So I would just
23 like some clarity how the mental health crisis plans to
24 be evaluated given the circumstances.

1 And, really, the last question is more of a
2 statement than a question, but it does transition into a
3 question. Consolidation is something that can be a good
4 change. If all schools were to come into one, I feel
5 like that could foster a lot of power within Wetzel
6 County. But this isn't what's being done. Currently,
7 the plan is, or what was originally the plan, was for
8 all schools to unite under one. This has been changed
9 to what seems to be from a student body, our
10 perspective, is just Magnolia being fought for.
11 Everybody wants to consolidate into Magnolia -- or not
12 everybody, but Paden City being pushed to Magnolia --
13 when this isn't what the plan was. This was a plan for
14 unity, not for division, which this was created. There
15 are cases of harassment. There are people being
16 pestered for going over -- my teacher, Mr. Bell, brought
17 up incidents that have happened already. Clearly, this
18 does not show that if the schools were merged, there
19 would not be unity. This is damage to the community,
20 damage to the student body. This is something I believe
21 that cannot be repaired in the short amount of time it
22 would take to merge.

23 There has been an attack, in my opinion, from
24 what the student body can perceive, as an attack on the

1 student body of different methods to try to take the
2 school down. Firstly, there was an illegal method that
3 a court struck down when the school was illegally closed
4 under the grounds of there being a, quote, imminent
5 danger, to Paden City High School, which the EPA then
6 later came out and stated, and I quote, there were no
7 imminent health risks. Typically, this would mean the
8 school would remain open. Things would go back to being
9 as they were. This did not happen. It only appeared as
10 if the attacks got closer and personal rather than for
11 the health of students.

12 This was then switched to staffing. This was
13 switched to staffing was the next event. I believe this
14 issue arose when this division first was announced and
15 was first tried. Teachers were afraid to stay because
16 they did not know that there would be job security, so I
17 believe the staffing issue was partially caused by the
18 board's own grasp to try to merge schools in a hurry. I
19 also believe that the staffing issue is one of your own
20 creation. My father is -- has several master's degrees
21 in education, and my stepmother, who has probably five
22 years of social work with special needs children, both
23 of them have tried to apply. Neither of them got a
24 call, neither of them got a voicemail, neither of them

1 got a letter in the mail, which I believe is highly --
2 sorry -- it's not professional at all.

3 Thirdly, there was budget -- I would leave the
4 budget statements to Mr. Bell yet again, as he stated
5 Magnolia High School's and New Martinsville budget,
6 which highly exceeds ours. I also would like to state
7 on that, that the board spent an estimated \$80,000 on
8 the court case to shut down Paden City High School,
9 which that could have been used to upgrade things like
10 Cassie Porter has stated, the sporting equipment, you
11 said we were lacking a track, which that money could
12 have been used to fund, and now it is with people -- you
13 said there isn't enough population in Paden City High
14 School, that could have also been caused by the merger.

15 So, ultimately, I would just like to ask what
16 other reasons are there to consolidate other than your
17 own personal needs as a board?

18 MS. PORTER: Thank you, Michael. It
19 takes a lot of courage to stand up in front of us
20 tonight, and I thank you.

21 There is a mental health crisis a
22 hundred percent nationwide, worldwide. We're in a very
23 tough time with the economy, with what we just went
24 through politically. Yes, this has had some impact that

1 we probably did not have the foresight to see the amount
2 of impact, but we will and we promise that we will
3 address that. This past summer when we had shut down
4 Paden City, we did offer counseling services. It was
5 brought to our attention that was a great need. So we
6 do take into consideration what you need, and we will
7 keep those services in place for as long as you need
8 those services.

9 We can't talk about personnel. We talked a
10 little bit about that, but we can't talk about that here
11 tonight.

12 And just so you know, Michael, I don't have a
13 personal agenda. My agenda is to do what is best for
14 student education. Education is a property right, and
15 once you have that, nobody can take it away from you.
16 It also is very impactful to the economy because when we
17 educate our students and provide for them the education
18 that they need, then they have options, they have
19 opportunities to go to college or trade school or into
20 the workforce. So our job as a school board is to make
21 sure that we are providing you the best education we can
22 possibly provide you.

23 So reasons to consolidate are -- I know you
24 think that they have different aspects, such as teacher

1 shortage. That's a national problem as well.
2 Education, we are not offering the best education that
3 we can. You deserve better, and that's what we're going
4 to give to you.

5 So, again, I appreciate you speaking tonight,
6 and I hope that answers your questions. Thank you.

7 MICHAEL RADABAUGH: Thank you.

8 MS. FONNER: Our next speaker is Izzy
9 Anderson.

10 IZZY ANDERSON: Hello, board. I come
11 forth to you today as a student of Paden City High
12 School. It is currently my junior year going on to be
13 my senior year next. I am a band member and a MOVTI
14 student. I have been going to Paden City since
15 kindergarten. Paden City schools and community are all
16 I have ever known. Another thing is, I'm best friends
17 with Dalton Hayes and a lot of other students being
18 negatively affected by this merge. Do you understand
19 how heartbreaking it is to watch the town and its people
20 suffer? Watching everyone mentally struggle while
21 struggling myself? It feels like I'm dying. Watching
22 people's color drain from their face is like I'm losing
23 everything at once. As a band member, I've waited for
24 years to be a senior and to have my senior banner, to be

1 a role model for underclassmen, to create memories, to
2 motivate everyone to do better, and to be able to call
3 it "my band." I want my last year of band camp with my
4 people. I want what everyone else deserves. I want my
5 senior year with my friends, teachers, and peers.

6 The teachers here put in a lot of work and
7 dedication to their students. Teachers here make me
8 feel seen. To be able to stand before you and say that
9 these people have saved my life is an understatement. I
10 am thankful for my community and the way it gives to
11 all. I want to graduate from Paden City and proudly say
12 that I did. These traditions build families and
13 memories that could never be replaced by anything.

14 I stand before you as someone who does
15 struggle, who understands, as a person, how things
16 benefit other people, but I think there is ways around
17 this that will benefit us all. Personally, I think what
18 the biggest problem is, is we want the truth. We
19 want -- we want things to be put out in an understanding
20 way, to be able to know that my -- during the summer, to
21 be able to know that my school was getting shut down was
22 very heartbreaking to me and it did cause a lot of
23 problems.

24 We just want visibility. We just want

1 fairness. We just want our community.

2 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Our next speaker
3 is Dalton Hayes.

4 DALTON HAYES: Good evening, board
5 members and everyone. You all know me, so I don't think
6 I need to introduce myself. But I just want to give
7 some kudos to Izzy. She's not a very social person.
8 For her to come up here and do that, that's amazing.

9 I want to start with my speech here.

10 I know that you all have heard from me many
11 times, but here I am again. I would just like to talk
12 about some things. When I testified to keep this school
13 open in July, I did not have to do that. I went out of
14 my comfort zone and fought for this school because it
15 was what saved me when I was at my lowest. And lately
16 I've been going through quite a lot, and the stress from
17 this school situation only makes it worse. To be
18 honest, I've been struggling mentally, and I know that
19 many others have been, too, and the added stress from
20 this school closure makes it much, much worse.

21 Do you know how important a senior year is to
22 any student? This is when you get to have fun while
23 you're still a child and you don't have as many classes
24 to worry about. You and your friends are supposed to do

1 fun activities and make the best of the time left you
2 have as children, such as making senior jeans and shirts
3 and watching senior sunsets or sunrises. Just have fun.
4 Can you imagine all of us juniors going to a new school
5 where we do not know anyone? We're not going to feel
6 welcomed, and we're not going to be able to feel like we
7 can do those activities.

8 You know, even with losing some of the
9 teachers due to uncertainty that you all have created
10 through this situation, I can't blame them for leaving
11 as they have their own families to fend for. I can say
12 that there have been days where I have just broke down
13 to some of the teachers in this building, and I'm very
14 thankful that they are still here. Even though there
15 have been changes, the staff still try to make our days
16 better. I still love this school, but because of the
17 thought that we'll not be here next year, it makes us
18 lose motivation. People do not care as much as they
19 used to, me being one of those people. I have seen the
20 spark of those who used to fight hard for this school,
21 me being one of them, lose that spark. I'm scared for
22 college, scared to start my new life out on my own, and
23 we should not have to do it twice by moving to a new
24 school. We are all tired. Why won't you leave us alone

1 with this? Does our mental health matter? You know,
2 99 percent of teenagers on Friday nights, what are they
3 doing? I bet you it's not sitting in this meeting
4 trying to save our school. They have better things to
5 worry about while they're still kids.

6 Now that I've ranted, here are some of my
7 questions. After three years -- not three years -- I'm
8 sorry -- after three different attempts to close our
9 school for various reasons, can you admit that at the
10 end of the day, what you guys want is to see the doors
11 of this school closed?

12 My second question is you say your number one
13 priority is the mental well-being and safety of these
14 students, all your students. We are here telling you
15 how we feel and we are struggling, and especially me.
16 Anyone that knows me in this crowd knows me as an
17 outgoing, loving, poppy person. And you can ask my
18 teachers, every day for the past month, they've asked me
19 every day, What's wrong? What's wrong? And I've been
20 dealing stuff -- dealing with stuff personally. But
21 this, this has really, really, really got to me.

22 Another question is how do you guys feel any
23 remorse for what you've put me and my student body
24 through in the past two years of constantly having to

1 worry about this? You know, kids get up in the morning
2 and go to school. They should have to worry about their
3 assignments and not worry about, oh, my gosh, am I going
4 to be here tomorrow, is the school going to be here
5 tomorrow.

6 And one final remark is if you're going to
7 consolidate, please do it the right way. Build a plan
8 and build either two new schools in Wetzel County or
9 work towards one. Because shoving us all into one
10 school, there's still going to be division. There's
11 still going to be people who think it's going to still
12 be Magnolia or they're going to say, oh, no, I'm still
13 here at Paden City. Build a new school, and that will
14 eliminate that.

15 So thank you for letting me speak, and I hope
16 you can answer my questions.

17 MS. PORTER: Thank you, Dalton. You and
18 I have spoken many times, and I appreciate you standing
19 up and speaking.

20 DALTON HAYES: Thank you.

21 MS. PORTER: The three attempts to close
22 the school are not related in the same way. I think
23 that sometimes you don't understand the things that go
24 on behind the scenes when we are working on making sure

1 we have building staffed and doing what is right for
2 kids. So there are three individual issues.

3 DALTON HAYES: I do understand that.
4 Sorry to interrupt you.

5 MS. PORTER: It's okay.

6 DALTON HAYES: But it's reason after
7 reason after reason. I mean, you just keep coming back
8 with another one.

9 MS. PORTER: But they're different
10 reasons. But I understand what you're saying.

11 DALTON HAYES: So why? Why is there
12 another reason after another reason after another
13 reason?

14 MS. PORTER: We need a change in Wetzel
15 County, and we, at this point, feel that the best option
16 is to move from four schools to two schools and then
17 continue on to build one Wetzel County school so that we
18 can offer you the best education possible and we can be
19 financially responsible as a school system.

20 DALTON HAYES: With you saying that, you
21 know, that's good to want the best for us as students,
22 but why wasn't that the plan when you tried to close the
23 school for EPA violations or air reasons, water reasons?
24 Why was that brought up?

1 MS. PORTER: Because two different -- two
2 very different reasons. One was environmental, and this
3 one was the state of Wetzel County Schools. Students
4 are my number one priority, and I know that that's
5 sometimes hard to see, and every student is going to
6 react differently from anything that happens in life,
7 whether it's changing schools, whether it's
8 consolidating, whether it's finishing out at your school
9 and not having to consolidate, when you decide to leave
10 and go to college, when you decide as an adult to change
11 jobs. We all have choices and things do happen in life,
12 and they're not always the exact way that we planned
13 them out to be, and that's just how life works. And
14 it's unfortunate that some kids will be impacted
15 differently. Some kids' senior year will be impacted.
16 Some kids in our county will get to see a new school
17 because they'll never be part of this. But,
18 unfortunately, as these kind of situations come up and
19 we have to talk about consolidation and doing best thing
20 and being financially responsible and making sure we
21 have people in front of the students, not on video
22 cameras, they're hard decisions for us to make, and this
23 is the time that we're making them.

24 DALTON HAYES: Now, the mental

1 well-being, what do you guys have to say about all that
2 you've put us through here at Paden City High School?

3 MS. PORTER: Nothing was done on purpose,
4 Dalton. Nobody meant to put anyone through mental
5 anguish. That was not what I woke up in the morning
6 thinking I'm going to impose mental anguish on the
7 students. I would never do that. The students are my
8 life. I love -- I love children. I love teaching.
9 I -- probably one of my favorite jobs ever was being a
10 principal in a school building. Not that I don't like
11 this job; however, it is very tough. But that's not
12 something that I woke up every wanting to do is cause
13 mental anguish, and I hope that I can put in position
14 things that you need. We have worked very hard on our
15 Tech Center. We have lots of students attending the
16 Tech Center. We are trying to make individual plans for
17 students as we go along. So we do have counselors, CIS.
18 We are trying our best to help with that. The state has
19 a big initiative. This entire state is going through
20 things. There are lots of schools in the state closing.
21 Lots of students are going through things. But just in
22 general, the world is a lot different now, and we have
23 to focus on everyone's mental health, students and
24 staff.

1 DALTON HAYES: I understand that. I do.
2 But do you understand -- I mean, I definitely do not
3 think it was any of your intentions to wake up and say,
4 I'm going to make them have a bad day. But do you
5 understand where I'm coming from when I say that this
6 cloud has been hanging over our heads for two years now,
7 and I've listened to my underclassmen cry, I have
8 listened to staff members cry, I've listened to my best
9 friends cry who are tired, who are beat down because of
10 this situation. So do you understand the mental
11 depressions that you guys have put us through with this
12 situation?

13 MS. PORTER: Again, I apologize for any
14 mental anguish that you've gone through. I do try to
15 understand exactly what you're going through. All of us
16 in life have gone through things that have put us in
17 different situations, and we have to deal with them. As
18 the adults, we do need to take care of our students, and
19 I promise you we will take care of your mental health to
20 the best of our ability in the school system.

21 DALTON HAYES: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

23 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

24 MS. FONNER: Josh Musgrave.

1 JOSH MUSGRAVE: Members of the board, we
2 address you tonight on the issue of combining schools.
3 I would like to say a school can be much more than a
4 place of education. A school is a place where you
5 form -- where you form who you want to be. And PCHS and
6 any other school in Wetzel County are no different. Our
7 schools are our homes, students and teachers alike.
8 Magnolia and Paden City High School are the pride of our
9 communities.

10 Members of the board, I know you have many
11 things going through your minds right now, but if you
12 vote to merge or consolidate you are voting to take away
13 our homes. If you vote for this, I want you to go home
14 and think, I just took away the pride of communities and
15 many people. One must realize that schools and students
16 are more than just numbers. We are living, breathing
17 people, just like you, with our strengths and our flaws.
18 I ask any school official tonight to ask yourself are
19 you really working for us and our education, or are you
20 working for charts and statistics? I recognize that the
21 last few years have been turbulent. But letting the
22 schools have their own individuality will help bring
23 stability back to this county.

24 The uncertainty of the consolidation issue

1 have driven many students and teachers to transfer away
2 from Wetzel County, and to stop fighting to bring those
3 numbers back up. Thank you for listening.

4 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

5 London Alexander.

6 LONDON ALEXANDER: Good afternoon,
7 Superintendent Ms. Porter, Wetzel County Board of
8 Education, and the members of the community.

9 Thank you for giving us, as students, the
10 opportunity to explain how the future plan to close our
11 school impacts us more -- impacts more than just our
12 education. My name is London Alexander, and I am a
13 freshman here at Paden City. I was originally
14 homeschooled but was given the opportunity to cheer for
15 Paden City when I was in the 8th grade. My second
16 semester I finally convinced my parents enough to send
17 me to public school. Since I was already cheering for
18 Paden City, this is where my parents chose to enroll me.
19 While they were filling out the paperwork, former
20 principal Ship was talking with my parents and also
21 Ms. Fritzman had said that if people didn't know that I
22 had been homeschooled, they would have thought that I
23 had grown up going to Paden City schools my entire life.
24 This is what makes Paden City so special. Yes, just

1 like any school, we have friends that are closer than
2 others, but when I came here or when any other new
3 student comes here, the whole school goes out of their
4 way just to accept us. I think I speak for the whole
5 student body and staff when I say this is not just a
6 school building to us. This is our home filled with our
7 family. And as I've recently experienced, this family
8 doesn't even stop at these doors. Even the alumni
9 recognizes us when we are out and will go out of their
10 way to ask us how we are doing.

11 So before the decision is made to close down
12 our school, I would like to ask you the following four
13 questions: My first question is if the merger is meant
14 to benefit the students, what programs will you provide?
15 Will this happen immediately or will we still be waiting
16 while this new school is built?

17 My next question is how will the board be sure
18 to preserve our traditions such as Orange'in Out Day in
19 honor of Logan Fluharty or the boat regatta in honor of
20 Matt Barker?

21 Another question I have is how do you plan to
22 keep the family culture that exists at PCHS incorporated
23 with this merger?

24 And my final question is if renovation and

1 maintenance was an issue considered to consolidate, then
2 why was the maintenance not kept up and budgeted for?

3 MS. PORTER: Programming will be --
4 again, thank you for standing up. You've very brave.

5 Programming provided will be immediate. We
6 will not wait on programming. We have planned to have
7 in place all of the courses that you need with live
8 teachers at both of our consolidated schools starting
9 next fall.

10 Honor tradition, we never want to take away
11 your tradition. You have a very strong alumni
12 association in this town, as do many other towns across
13 the United States that keep that tradition alive. That
14 will never go away. There will always be a Paden City
15 tradition, just as many other schools that have
16 consolidated keep that tradition.

17 How do you honor the traditions that you have?
18 You get to honor those by working together with new
19 students and then you get to build new traditions. So a
20 lot of your traditions that you would take with you to a
21 new school, they would have traditions, and then you
22 would decide which ones that you needed to keep and
23 which ones were important and you work together as
24 student leaders to do that.

1 Family culture is very important. It's very
2 hard for us on the high school level to do family
3 cultures. Family engagement, though, is a big topic in
4 the state of West Virginia, as probably the entire
5 nation, because we want our families to be involved. We
6 want our families in Wetzel County to stay involved with
7 our students no matter what school they attend.

8 As far as the maintenance and upkeep, probably
9 some of that, you know, we do what we can and we update
10 what we need to update, and sometimes you don't update
11 it until it's too late, and I don't really have a solid
12 answer for you on updating the facilities in a timely
13 manner. Our facilities are currently open. Yes, the
14 State does see that we can update some of our facilities
15 even more, and I think that's part of this whole
16 process, that if we are updating two facilities versus
17 four facilities, then that's going to push us faster to
18 our goal of building one brand-new school.

19 LONDON ALEXANDER: Thank you.

20 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

21 MS. FONNER: I'm not sure if I have this
22 name pronounced right. Kaenn Hunt.

23 KAENN HUNT: Good evening, Superintendent
24 Porter and Wetzel County Board of Education. Thank you

1 for the opportunity to speak tonight. What brings me to
2 speak tonight is the emotional roller coaster that my
3 fellow classmates and I have endured for the past two
4 years. My name is Kaenn Hunt, and I'm a junior at Paden
5 City High School. By the time of the school closure, I
6 will be starting my senior year and cannot imagine
7 completely restarting for my last year of high school
8 and then restarting again for my first year of college.
9 In 7th grade, I transferred to PCHS from a school where
10 I was treated unfairly for various reasons, and can
11 wholeheartedly say I have never felt so welcomed by a
12 group of people as I did at Paden City High School. A
13 few years after I moved, I was going through what I
14 would consider to be the hardest time of my life, and
15 nobody was there for me like the staff members at PCHS,
16 some of which no longer work in the county due to
17 unstable workplace and not knowing that they would
18 continue to have a job.

19 Since the beginning of my sophomore year, the
20 thought of where we would go to school has loomed over
21 our heads. It had cast a shadow on activities that we
22 should enjoy and remember as being the best time of our
23 lives, but we'll now remember as an extremely
24 stressful and hurtful part of it. The uncertainty of

1 our school has affected all of us in great measures.
2 One of my closest friends is no longer himself due to
3 the toll this has taken on him and everybody else. I am
4 not completely opposed to consolidation; however, I want
5 it to be fair to all students involved. I feel that the
6 student body, staff, and community of Paden City has
7 been left in the dark throughout this entire process.
8 We have not been included in much of what the other
9 students have been. It isn't fair to us. I think
10 collectively, as a group, we want consolidation but do
11 not want to be shoved into Magnolia. We want one move,
12 one school, for all students on new land with new colors
13 and a new name. I want to graduate with my peers
14 wearing green and white and want to see consolidation in
15 the future, but the right way. Thank you for your time.

16 MS. FONNER: Patty Wright.

17 PATTY WRIGHT: Good evening. Tonight
18 we're meeting to discuss the plan for closing Paden City
19 High School by next school year, and it's been my
20 understanding all along that the discussion is about
21 merging us into Magnolia instead of what you're
22 referring to as a consolidation. I think it's just a
23 misnomer to call what you're doing a consolidation when,
24 in fact, a consolidation is usually considering the

1 entirety of the county schools. My daughter went
2 through that her junior year in Spencer, and our school
3 system handled things entirely differently than you-all
4 have in that they were informed from their sophomore
5 year on at Spencer High School that the two schools
6 would be consolidated and plans were made to purchase
7 land, build the school, and the students and staff and
8 even I, as the band booster president, was kept up with
9 all the new information regarding the progress of those
10 plans. By my daughter's junior year in high school, she
11 was told this would be her last year. And, yes, there
12 were tears, and, yes, there was an awful lot of
13 emotional stuff going on. But the way that the school
14 board and the superintendent handled that situation so
15 beautifully was to include the students in a plan for
16 what was going to happen at their new consolidated
17 school by talking with them about forming a committee of
18 students from both schools to discuss school colors,
19 mascots, school song, all the things that we remember
20 from our high schools doing. You know, we are proud
21 still here at Paden City High School to sing our school
22 song. And as a result of those plans that were thought
23 out carefully, presented, her experience was far
24 different than what I see these kids experiencing.

1 I moved back to Paden City 30 years ago after
2 going through a turbulent time in my personal life.
3 When I returned to Paden City, I became withdrawn and
4 had a difficult time being out in public because there
5 of shame about my weight and other things that were
6 going on in my personal life. I was suffering from
7 anxiety and depression. And as a trained social worker,
8 I wasn't able to help myself heal. But the healing
9 process really began for me when a high school student,
10 former classmate of mine, met me and said, "Patty, how
11 come you haven't been attending the alumni banquets and
12 meetings?"

13 And I said, Mike, because I'm ashamed of how I
14 look, I'm ashamed of how I feel about myself, and I
15 don't want anyone to see me like this because I was the
16 co-salutatorian of my class and I went on to college and
17 got a degree in social work. But my life crumbled out
18 of control, out of my control, and I didn't even
19 recognize myself after the end of, basically, my 39th
20 year before I returned here to live with my parents at
21 that age.

22 And what I see these kids experiencing here
23 now is what I liken to the effects of a divorce. You
24 can't see, if you've never experienced a divorce, the

1 effects of what it has on the adults, the children, the
2 grandparents, everyone, but everyone has a piece of the
3 pain that's caused. And when I see what's going on with
4 this talk of merger, the things that I relate between
5 divorce and this merger is the fact that each side has
6 hired an attorney, each side has their own viewpoint
7 about what's going on and what's the best thing for the
8 child, for the students. All the while, we haven't
9 really talked to the students and heard from them about
10 how their hearts are feeling in dealing with this. And
11 divorce for children is more than just the physical
12 separation of the adults. They often have to choose
13 sides. They have to decide if they're going to live
14 with mom or dad. And now the kids are faced with
15 deciding not to stay in their own home, Paden City High
16 School, but having to go to an entirely different town
17 and school and facing the unknown future. There's
18 anxiety. There's depression. There's a lack of
19 interest in normal activities, and sometimes just a
20 plain I want to forget about things and bury my head.
21 And I know a lot of students have expressed to me that
22 they don't even really have a desire to study anymore or
23 to go forward.

24 My last comment to you is this: You can do

1 something about this tonight. In the name of God, do
2 you duty, school board members. In the name of God, do
3 your duty for these children. Give them future and a
4 hope again. And don't take away the things that mean so
5 much to them, because in the long run, it is not going
6 to be successful. I don't care how much you plan. God
7 has bigger plans. God has bigger plans than what you
8 all planned, and he can put an angel in front of every
9 one of you, and even me tonight, to show you that you
10 can't keep going forward on this. This should be the
11 end of this tonight.

12 MS. FONNER: Thank you for sharing with
13 us.

14 Okay. We're going to take a five-minute
15 recess. It is 7:21. We'll be back in here at 7:26 to
16 start.

17 -----

18 (Brief break)

19 -----

20 MS. FONNER: It's not us not hearing or
21 listening, we're not allowed to reply to it. It has to
22 be administration.

23 Our next speaker is Mike Turner.

24 MIKE TURNER: Welcome to Paden City High

1 School, one of our two community schools in Paden City.
2 And as you can see, we have a great support here
3 supporting Wetzel County Schools. I do have questions.
4 My first question is what is the result of vapor
5 intrusion sampling taken at Magnolia High School?

6 My second one is has radiation testing taken
7 place at Magnolia High School?

8 My third one is how are vulnerabilities of
9 physical risk to students, teachers, and citizens
10 identified to keep them from physical harm?

11 The fourth is what is the mitigation plan to
12 hold back a derailed railcar when it might hit the
13 gymnasium wall? You see, on June 25th, I made a
14 delegation presentation on chemical and physical
15 exposures to the students and employees -- and employees
16 of Paden City -- that Paden City High School might be
17 exposed to when moving to Magnolia High School. I
18 stated that there was a risk of creasote vapor
19 intrusions at the school because over a hundred years
20 the railroad ties have been located near the school.
21 Since that time, I have found that a public health
22 assessment was conducted at Viking Glass Company, less
23 than a half a mile from the high school. The following
24 are some of the chemicals found abandoned in the

1 groundwater and the subsurface soil: Arsenic, lead,
2 mercury, cadmium, hydrofluoric acid, hydrosulfuric acid,
3 xylene, and other petroleum distillates, as well as
4 radioactive materials uranium-238, thorium-232, and
5 potassium-40 isotopes were present at the site.

6 I then discussed the location of the railroad
7 being 28 foot from the building, and if there was a
8 railcar derailment and probability of the car hitting
9 the building was very great. On July 21st, just less
10 than a week later, after my presentation, a derailment
11 in Virginia of five CSX freight cars hit a wall causing
12 a wall to collapse over on top of four garages and
13 crushed them all. On July -- the next day, on July
14 22nd, a CSX train jumps tracks and crashes into a garage
15 in Niagara Falls. At the Magnolia High School, the
16 railroad's 28 foot from the wall of the gymnasium, which
17 is a supporting wall for that building. If a train
18 comes off and hits that wall and the wall falls down,
19 the probability of the roof falling in is great. It's a
20 supporting wall for that roof.

21 At the end of my presentation, I stated that
22 Paden City High School students should not be moved into
23 Magnolia High School until these findings were
24 corrected. I also made a statement that I was aware

1 that the board was not allowed to make any statements to
2 the delegations. But as a citizen, I deserve an answer,
3 and I said that to each one of you. I then gave you a
4 paper with the information on it that I'd like to have
5 answered, and I received no answer. I received no
6 answer. So after two months, I asked the board
7 president, "Why have I received no answer?" And the
8 reply was, "We're not allowed to do answers in written
9 form, but the superintendent is supposed to and I'll
10 talk to her the next day." Well, now it's six months
11 later, and not one board member or the superintendent
12 has responded to my request. My demand for a response
13 must be viewed as not very important, wouldn't happen to
14 us, we don't need to know that information.
15 Interesting, isn't it? What kind of example is that
16 where you never answer people who come month after month
17 talking to you and there's no response? You're not
18 allowed --

19 MS. FONNER: Your time is up.

20 MS. PORTER: What is the result of vapor
21 intrusion sampling? You meant at Magnolia? Is that
22 what your question was?

23 MIKE TURNER: My time --

24 MS. FONNER: It just beeped.

1 MIKE TURNER: Is that five minutes?

2 MS. PORTER: Yes.

3 MIKE TURNER: That was fast. Sorry.
4 Okay.

5 MS. PORTER: What is the result of
6 vapor --

7 MIKE TURNER: My first question is what
8 is the result of vapor intrusion sampling taken at
9 Magnolia High School?

10 MS. PORTER: We did not do vapor
11 intrusion sampling at Magnolia High School. We did not
12 do radiation sampling at Magnolia High School. The
13 vulnerabilities of teachers and students from physical
14 harm, we take that into consideration every single day
15 when we send our teachers and students to school.

16 How are we going to hold back a derailed car
17 in case the -- it hits a school wall? We're not. It's
18 going to hit the wall. We're here to talk --

19 MIKE TURNER: So you know that.

20 MS. PORTER: -- about the consolidation
21 of these two schools. I don't have answers for you on
22 that. But thank you.

23 MIKE TURNER: That is very risky. No
24 mediation. No -- nothing redundancy to stop that, and

1 you're going to allow more students in that building,
2 but, you know it.

3 MS. FONNER: The next speaker is Mayor
4 Hochstrasser.

5 MAYOR HOCHSTRASSER: You did good. You
6 got that perfect.

7 One thing I'm going to say is these students
8 are amazing that's talked here. They really are.

9 High schools are the center of your community
10 and the anchor of your city. When cities lose a school,
11 it hurts property values and tax revenues. Schools are
12 where young people first learn how to interact with
13 their communities in official and personal capacities.
14 They offer stability, routine, and community. Public
15 schools are gathering places. Schools shuttered can
16 become breeding grounds for crime. They become eyesores
17 in the community. A vacant school still needs to be
18 maintained and insured, which can be costly. Do you
19 have any idea what the city is going to lose in revenue
20 as far as our tax base, property values, anything like
21 that? From what we were looking at, the city stands to
22 lose about 18- to \$20,000 in revenue in water and sewer.
23 Property values, studies have said you'll lose 6 to
24 10 percent. If that's the case, we're losing 15- to

1 24,000 in revenue to a total of about 44,000 a year.
2 That's going to be hard for a small community like this
3 to replace. Residents move out of town wanting to move
4 closer so their children are not bussed. They choose
5 other schools because they don't like the welcoming
6 school that has been chosen for them. Studies have been
7 done stating that academic scores of the displaced
8 students often went south and it also could have a
9 negative effect on the new peers at the receiving school
10 academically. There will need to be more support given
11 to these welcoming schools -- to these welcoming schools
12 to help build school culture and deal with the emotional
13 effects on the student body. Thank you.

14 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

15 Rodney McWilliams.

16 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Good evening. As has
17 been stated multiple times already this evening, there
18 seems to be a myriad of reasons over the past 15 months
19 for the ultimate closure of Paden City High School and
20 now the closure of Hundred High School. But one thing I
21 wanted to focus in on was I believe there was a work
22 session held just in the past two or three months where
23 the bulk of the conversation surrounded some of the test
24 assessments and the county's performance on these what

1 we used to call standardized tests. And the results
2 weren't what we would all like them to be. But in
3 relation to that, it seems to have been stated -- well,
4 it doesn't say was stated -- by administration and also
5 by some supporters in another community in support of
6 consolidation, that one reason why our test scores are
7 low is because we don't have enough certified teachers
8 in classrooms. By consolidating, we can ensure more
9 certified teachers in the classrooms, thereby increasing
10 our test scores. I want to premise this by saying we
11 are putting a lot of faith in a test as a barometer. In
12 the past when these tests came back, the normal
13 operating standard was to remediate, was to help the
14 school that was floundering, not close it.

15 But anyway, so I looked into all 55 counties
16 in West Virginia, and as far as the counties that are
17 consolidated or partially consolidated, about 80 percent
18 of West Virginia has some form of consolidation at the
19 secondary level, 12 counties, about 22 percent of West
20 Virginia counties, are unconsolidated, and I count
21 Wetzel County as unconsolidated, even though Valley High
22 School is a long-term consolidation. So what I looked
23 at was the percentage of certified teachers in each
24 county. And first I do have a couple questions and I'll

1 throw them -- do you know what the current percentage of
2 certified teachers in Wetzel County is and do you know
3 what the state average is? And without giving you the
4 answer, I'll let you know that we're not at the state
5 average, but we're not too far off. And what I found
6 out was in the top four counties -- and those are the
7 counties above the state average, because that's going
8 to be our goal -- in the top four counties that are well
9 above the state average, two of them are
10 nonconsolidated, Wood County at 100 percent and
11 Monongalia County at 96 percent. And I kept on looking,
12 kept on looking, kept on thinking. And instead of the
13 22 percent that you would think would be represented
14 because 22 percent is 12 out of 55, roughly, the
15 percentage of counties that are nonconsolidated is
16 higher than the 22 percent. So we actually carry a
17 higher certification level in nonconsolidated counties
18 than you would expect. So I don't think consolidation
19 actually solves the problem of certification. We all
20 know how do you get a percentage up? I mean, it's
21 simple math. You either increase your numerator or you
22 decrease your denominator. So two solutions I'd like to
23 offer is can we incentive the staff in our county to
24 become certified, which would increase the numerator.

1 Right? So that makes the percentage higher. The other
2 option is you decrease the denominator, which means you
3 fire uncertified teachers. Maybe that's the goal.

4 Secondly, I looked at test scores by county.
5 And in high school, it's reading, English/language arts,
6 science, and math. And in math, the percentages do
7 follow. About 22 percent of the top 12 counties in West
8 Virginia are nonconsolidated counties, and that carries
9 the same weight as consolidated versus nonconsolidated
10 in the population. However, in science and in reading,
11 nonconsolidated counties outperform what you would
12 expect. There are roughly about 40 percent of the top
13 12 counties in West Virginia are nonconsolidated. So
14 that tells me the correlation between consolidation
15 doesn't actually follow -- the test scores don't
16 actually follow consolidation. Now, I understand the
17 hypothesis is if you have fewer schools, higher
18 certification of the teachers, they should be teaching a
19 different curriculum or what have you, and the test
20 scores should come out higher. That's a nice
21 hypothesis, and I'm trying to help prove it out. And
22 what I was finding was it didn't prove.

23 So I talked to our friends in Brooke County, a
24 consolidated county for over 50 years, whose test scores

1 were about that of Wetzel County. And they basically
2 said that in their assessment, the test score was -- the
3 test is a bad barometer. It is not a good gauge of
4 accomplishment. The faculty in Brooke County actually
5 looked at the test and realized that the test, which is
6 the SAT test, doesn't really follow the curriculum. So
7 that is an internal fix. That doesn't include closing
8 the school because God knows Brooke County can't close
9 any more schools. They're already consolidated.

10 The other issue was the seriousness with which
11 the students attempt the test. And they interviewed
12 these students. I won't say they interviewed a
13 hundred percent of them, but the gentleman told me they
14 interviewed several students and they said there's no
15 accountability, there's no incentive, there's no reason
16 for us to do well on these tests, which is said, but
17 it's true. So how do we incentivize these students to,
18 one, allow them to take hold of these tests so that if
19 we are going to use a test score, which, again, I say is
20 not a valid barometer, but is one that seems to be
21 accepted, if we are going to use a test score -- I
22 know -- how do we ensure -- you're going to gavel me --
23 that we give them a reason to take the test seriously so
24 that they do -- thank you.

1 MS. FONNER: I was trying to let you get
2 to the end of the sentence, but --

3 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: I run on. So my
4 questions were do you know what the percentage of
5 certified teachers at present are in Wetzel County, and
6 do you understand what the state average is for that?

7 MR. MCPHERSON: So I don't think I can
8 give you a percentage, but I do know our numbers. We
9 talked about that earlier about folks that we have
10 unfilled positions. An unfilled position, of course, is
11 a substitute, and there's nothing wrong with
12 substitutes. And, you know, sometimes our positions are
13 filled with folks in alternative certification programs,
14 which is not a bad thing. We have some wonderful folks
15 that went through alternative certification and become
16 teachers, and we do work with -- pretty lucky to work
17 with three universities so far with a couple teachers
18 and residents and some alternative certification folks
19 and, you know --

20 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: So the answer is you
21 don't know the percentage?

22 MR. MCPHERSON: I don't know the
23 percentage. I know we have around ten. So --

24 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: I'm sorry?

1 MR. MCPHERSON: It's around ten folks,
2 though.

3 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Okay. The percentage
4 of certified teachers in Wetzel County, according to the
5 West Virginia Department of Education, is -- I just lost
6 it. I'm sorry. I had it right in front of me.

7 86.12 percent. The state average for certification at
8 the secondary level is about 87 percent. So we're not
9 far off the state average. So, again, the test scores
10 that we want to correlate with certification of the
11 teachers doesn't seem to follow because our test scores
12 are not at the state average. However, counties like
13 Wood County who are a hundred percent certified -- and
14 this proves your point. I'm actually going to give
15 you a point here.

16 MR. MCPHERSON: Okay.

17 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Wood County has
18 100 percent certification, so they claim, and
19 Williamstown High School was in the top ten in both
20 science and math. So there are areas where it does
21 correlate, but they were anomalies.

22 MS. FONNER: Mr. McWilliams, do you have
23 any other questions that were already asked that you can
24 answer.

1 MR. MCPHERSON: Well, I'm going to do a
2 follow-up with you. It may be a leap of faith with me
3 here, but I think you'll follow me. You know, when we
4 don't have positions -- when we have unfilled positions
5 every day that we start out with, we start out lacking
6 substitutes, and our teachers who are certified and who
7 work hard every day and our principals who come to work
8 every day find themselves in a tough position sometimes
9 covering classes. And, you know, and it's one thing to
10 cover a class here and there, but when you start having
11 things happen all the time, then, you know, what you had
12 planned for the day doesn't happen, and that does --
13 that does bear on things. I think that's important
14 to --

15 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: So to follow up,
16 then, the higher percentage of certified teachers
17 wouldn't necessarily correlate to higher test scores
18 because you said they have to juggle their schedules
19 anyway.

20 MR. MCPHERSON: Well, and so part of our
21 problem is our vacancies, yes, but that also means we
22 don't have -- do you see the leap here?

23 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Yeah.

24 MR. MCPHERSON: Okay.

1 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: I understand. Thank
2 you very much.

3 MS. FONNER: Thank you.
4 Lisa Young.

5 LISA YOUNG: Okay. I spoke to you guys
6 before, so you know who I am. I'm Lisa Young. I have
7 two grandkids that go to this school that I have custody
8 of. First I have a few questions. The impact
9 statements that Magnolia presents a better long-term
10 option, please define long term and how that plays into
11 planning to build a new, single, more centrally located
12 consolidated school out in the county.

13 My second question is can you tell us how the
14 results of the Thrasher survey where it interrogated
15 into the planning to close Paden City High School and
16 Hundred?

17 My third one: Some results from the Thrasher
18 survey that we've all seen and looked at showed that two
19 communities were more adverse to consolidation than the
20 other two. The two that did not want consolidation were
21 Hundred and Paden City. The two areas that were more
22 willing to consolidate are New Martinsville and
23 Valley-Pine Grove area, according to the survey. It
24 appears the two communities that do not embrace

1 consolidation are being punished for voicing their
2 viewpoints by closing their schools, and the other two
3 communities are being rewarded by keeping the schools in
4 their representative communities.

5 Also, my other question would be or statement
6 is the court ordered that all -- when we was all in
7 court, it was ordered that everything was to be returned
8 to normal and that -- you went and made suggestions that
9 no county teams play on our field. How does this show
10 your idea of unity?

11 And then while I was sitting up here, another
12 one, Mr. McPherson was talking, you're talking about the
13 subs. Are these subs that have been offerered positions,
14 or are they just subs because they want to be subs?

15 Also, another statement is, speaking to
16 several students, are you aware that there is many
17 students that are not planning to follow your plan, that
18 are planning to go different directions, to other
19 schools, that are planning to quit school, that are
20 planning to homeschool? And I, for one, have one that
21 will be a senior next year. When I talk to him now, you
22 know what he says? Get me in a building; get me out.
23 I'm done fighting them. This is ridiculous. I don't
24 even want to be in a building. What's that to look

1 forward to for a senior year? I mean, seriously. Think
2 back to your senior year. You have memories; right?
3 Your junior year you have memories. Look at what these
4 kids have. Twenty years from now, when somebody pops up
5 and says, What did you do your junior year? We fought
6 to keep our school open. Why? Why are we fighting?
7 Look to your left. Look at those kids setting there.
8 Almost a complete full thing where it was a little bit
9 ago. Do you think them kids want to be sitting there on
10 a Friday night when they could be hanging with their
11 friends, when they could be somewhere else? But they're
12 sitting there because that shows where these kids want
13 to be. They want to be in this building. They want
14 this to be their school. Why do the kids have to be
15 moved? If this has to be a consolidation, why can it
16 not be a one-time consolidation into a new school? Why
17 do these kids have to be uplifted, taken to another
18 school, then uplifted again for some of them, possibly,
19 and put into another school? It might not be the
20 juniors, the sophomores. It might not be none of them
21 that see that. But you're talking about taking the 7th
22 and 8th graders to New Martinsville. It might be them.
23 So there. You have them going from this school, going
24 to another school, and then going to another school.

1 Why? Why do you not do one move if you want to do it?
2 Why keep going?

3 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

4 MS. PORTER: Number one, the court order
5 does not play into this meeting.

6 As far as substitute teachers go, any
7 substitute teacher that is applying for a job and is
8 certified and bids on that job does have a chance for
9 that job. Families and schools -- families do have
10 school choice nowadays in the state of West Virginia.
11 You can take your child to any public school that you
12 wish as long as you can provide transportation.

13 LISA YOUNG: So you're willing to lose
14 students by doing a plan of merging into a school and
15 then -- or consolidating -- let me rephrase that -- and
16 then consolidating possibly again? You're willing to
17 lose students over that.

18 MS. PORTER: So the -- just so you know,
19 I'm going to circle back just a little bit, the
20 long-term plan is approximately five years. Do I want
21 to lose any students? No. Do we already lose students?
22 Yes. Have we already lost students for years? Yes.
23 Families --

24 LISA YOUNG: And you've gained several

1 students also.

2 MS. PORTER: Excuse me. Families do have
3 choice. We don't want to lose them, though. We want to
4 create the best opportunities for them.

5 LISA YOUNG: Right. But do you realize
6 how many students you have gained also from other
7 communities because they want to be here, because they
8 feel safe here? Do you realize that?

9 MS. PORTER: Yes.

10 MS. FONNER: Tammy Johnson.

11 TAMMY JOHNSON: Hello. I really can't
12 believe you people gave me a microphone this time.

13 The issues I am having is that you say that
14 this is going to be a better education for our kids, but
15 there's absolutely no change in any curriculum. None
16 whatsoever. It is like problem after problem after
17 problem. It's like taking gunfire. First it's the
18 plume, then the kids are in imminent danger, then it's a
19 teacher shortage. Now you're talking about funding.
20 What is it? What is the reason? There should only be
21 one reason, and there should only be one real reason,
22 because when you come up with multiple reasons as to why
23 you're going to close a school, it seems pretty
24 fictitious. Pretty fictitious to me. You-all want to

1 send our kids to a school with kids that they don't get
2 along with. There isn't a person in this room that
3 started a Facebook group called "Let's Make New
4 Martinsville Great Again" that puts up memes that they
5 think they're funny and take digs at our cheerleaders.
6 That is absolutely wrong. That is the kind of turmoil
7 that has been caused throughout these communities.

8 My son goes to MOVTI. There is -- have you
9 done the math on how long these kids are going to be on
10 a bus a day and how many miles they'll travel? My son
11 will get on a bus and go to Magnolia High School to get
12 on a bus to go back to St. Marys to get on a bus to go
13 back to New Martinsville School to get on a bus to come
14 back to Paden City. That is 72.4 miles a day. Every
15 child that goes to MOVTI from Paden City, 72.4 miles a
16 day. Almost two hours of absolute nothing but setting
17 on a bus, tapping on his phone, taking a nap, or doing
18 whatever kids do on a bus these days. How is that a
19 better education? Would you want your kids on a bus for
20 72.4 miles five days a week? That's a lot. And that's
21 not even the kids out in Hundred that are going over
22 Barker stop after stop.

23 I do have a question. In a board meeting a
24 couple months ago, Hundred pled their case for why they

1 felt Valley should be pushed into their school. And as
2 far as I'm concerned, they had a really good case.
3 They're not understaffed. Their teachers will not go to
4 Valley. Why wasn't that taken into consideration when
5 you have the sewage backing up at Valley, you have the
6 water issue that they have out at Valley. Is it because
7 sooner or later you plan on just pushing Valley and
8 Hundred into Magnolia the way you're pushing Paden City?
9 Is the one school for all actually going to be Magnolia
10 Blue Eagles? Is that what the real goal is here?
11 Because you do know that's what everybody thinks.
12 That's what everybody thinks. It makes no sense as to
13 why you would push Hundred's kids into a dilapidated
14 school with the sewage backing up and no water. And
15 people can't help but feel the reason is, is so you can
16 use it later to push them into Magnolia. So is that
17 your real goal, Ms. Porter? That's what we all want to
18 know.

19 MS. PORTER: And, Mrs. Johnson, I believe
20 I've answered that this evening.

21 TAMMY JOHNSON: They didn't hear it if
22 you did. Is your real plan to push everybody --

23 MS. PORTER: Excuse me. Excuse me.

24 TAMMY JOHNSON: -- into Magnolia Blue

1 Eagles?

2 MS. PORTER: Excuse me.

3 MS. FONNER: Calm down.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Why are you
5 gaveling her when she still has time? You said in the
6 beginning to be respectful.

7 MS. FONNER: Sir, you need to stop or
8 you'll have to leave.

9 MS. PORTER: Am I allowed to answer your
10 question? Would you like the answer now or you want to
11 wait? Either way is fine.

12 TAMMY JOHNSON: I'd like an answer.

13 MS. PORTER: The answer is today I drove
14 out and looked at property, so my plan is not to move
15 everybody to Magnolia. That is not my plan. That is
16 not the plan that I intend to present to the board when
17 the time comes.

18 TAMMY JOHNSON: Why wasn't it taken into
19 consideration to push Valley into Hundred since its
20 building is better?

21 MS. PORTER: This meeting is not about
22 Valley and Hundred. Thank you.

23 TAMMY JOHNSON: This is about Wetzel
24 County Schools.

1 MS. FONNER: You've had your five
2 minutes, and she's answered your question. You'll need
3 to sit down.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She didn't. She
5 didn't, though.

6 MS. FONNER: Ma'am --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She didn't have
8 her five minutes. She interrupted her. She should get
9 40 seconds back.

10 MS. FONNER: Ma'am.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She should get 40
12 seconds back. I'm sorry.

13 MS. FONNER: If you're going to continue,
14 you'll have to leave.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I will leave, but
16 I'm telling you this, this is wrong because she
17 interrupted her.

18 MS. FONNER: When you ask the questions,
19 all the questions are done ahead of time and she
20 answered.

21 The next speaker is Jon Baker.

22 JON BAKER: Rebranding of this new school
23 will be paramount to the success of this new
24 consolidated school if approved by this board and the

1 state board of education.

2 Has this new school's mission statement been
3 drafted yet? If so, how does it vary from the current
4 mission statements for both Magnolia and Paden City High
5 School?

6 Is there a committee already made up that is
7 working on the rebranding and new recommendations for
8 the new school colors, uniforms, names, et cetera?

9 Considering time is of the essence of this
10 matter and if there is no such committee, then what is
11 the timeline for rebranding?

12 Shouldn't current students that are affected
13 by this move be involved in this process? If not the
14 students, who will be involved in this rebranding
15 process?

16 And it is my understanding no one section of
17 this impact statement can be removed. Is that correct?
18 As an example, you cannot say to remove a section that
19 deals with retaining all of the current staff at all of
20 the schools. This has to be accepted as a whole;
21 correct?

22 What caused the lack of staff specifically at
23 Paden City High School? And how is it really fiscally
24 responsible to make two moves if all of these upgrades

1 have to be done at the other schools?

2 That's all my questions.

3 MS. PORTER: Okay. No, the new mission
4 statement is not drafted. Our mission is still to
5 educate our students. This is a post-consolidation
6 decision.

7 There is no committee already made up. I know
8 that that's out there. That is false. I do speak with
9 students every nine weeks at each of the high schools.
10 We have superintendent's councils. And, yes, we have
11 spoken about what would happen if we consolidate, but
12 there is no set committee. The students would love to
13 be involved in this, as they should. They should
14 100 percent be able to give their choice of what this
15 will look like when we rebrand. It would be their
16 school, so they would need to have that choice. I'm
17 100 percent behind that.

18 As far as no one section can be removed in the
19 impact statement and moving staff, we do plan to have
20 jobs for all of our staff. So I'm not sure if I
21 misunderstood that question, but we do plan to retain
22 all of our staff.

23 JON BAKER: Including coaches.

24 MS. PORTER: Including coaches. Lack of

1 staff at PCHS, there are varying reasons. We did not
2 have meetings with every person that has decided to
3 leave. Some of them have, we've had some face-to-face,
4 nothing specific, but that probably is a good idea going
5 forward.

6 Fiscally responsible with the upgrades. The
7 upgrades in the impact statement are things that the
8 State of West Virginia has said that they believe we
9 should do. Do we have to do all of those? No. Do we
10 need to be fiscally responsible when we do the updates?
11 Yes.

12 JON BAKER: Thank you.

13 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

14 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

15 Amanda Anderson.

16 AMANDA ANDERSON: Good evening, board.
17 My name is Amanda Anderson. I graduated from Paden City
18 High School. I've got a junior, got a 7th grader. With
19 the majority of the concern seems around the high
20 schools 9 through 12, I want to focus on the future of
21 the Paden City 7th and 8th grade students. This
22 proposal, if approved by Wetzel County Board of
23 Education and then approved by the Wetzel County --
24 Wetzel -- West Virginia State Board of Education would

1 see the 7th and 8th grade students from Paden City being
2 bussed ten miles or more to the New Martinsville School
3 in the Steelton -- Steelton section of New Martinsville,
4 where a perfectly good facility sits at the north end of
5 Paden City which easily houses 50 to 60 kids. When PCES
6 building was opened in 1977, it housed 1st through 5th
7 grades, and each grade had three classrooms, 15
8 classrooms total, along with the separate music room,
9 special ed room, and it still had extra rooms left over.
10 I don't see why this facility should be ignored when it
11 comes to housing Paden City 7th and 8th grade students.
12 First, there's ample time to make any accommodations
13 needed to fit these students into the building.

14 First question: What is the current facility
15 utilization rate for PCES?

16 Secondly, and maybe one of the most important
17 reasons is this: Long Drain is a K-through-8 facility,
18 Shortline is a K-through-8 facility, New Martinsville is
19 a K-through-8 facility, and, actually, all are mostly
20 K-through-8 facilities. So why would Paden City
21 elementary not also be made a K-through-8 facility?

22 Question: Do you not think it would be fair and
23 equitable to have each attendance served by a
24 K-through-8 facility, especially when one of them is

1 already located in town and would not require any
2 additional bussing?

3 Do you think it's the wisest move to bus an
4 additional 50 to 60 kids over 10 miles when they can
5 attend school in their own town?

6 I need to point out that the impact statements
7 states that there will be no additional bussing costs to
8 transport Paden City 7th and 8th graders to New
9 Martinsville. How is that possible? Will they be
10 dropped off at Magnolia, where the additional
11 transportation costs do increase, and then walk to New
12 Martinsville School? Any costs associated with getting
13 students all the way to New Martinsville must be
14 calculated or allocated to those students going up
15 Route 2 to New Martinsville School. For that reason,
16 the impact statement should be deemed misleading. By
17 keeping PCES a K-through-8 facility, the junior high
18 activities can be offered at Paden City. Is that not
19 fair and equitable? The other attendance areas will be
20 able retain their identities, but Paden City would be
21 forced to give up their extracurricular activities, such
22 as sports and clubs. Paden City has a unique
23 opportunity to offer a wonderful junior high band and
24 music program, a program the town's high school is

1 renowned for. Why would you take this away? Paden City
2 needs to maintain its identity in some fashion, and
3 making PCES a K-through-8 school and keeping our
4 students in town through 8th grade is the perfect way to
5 do this and maintain fairness and equality among the
6 counties' four attendance areas.

7 Last summer, when the emergency closing was
8 proposed, the reason behind moving PC students to New
9 Martinsville schools was because there wasn't enough
10 time to make the accommodation needed. Well, that's not
11 the case for this proposal. If approved by both the
12 board county and the state boards of education, in the
13 upcoming months, there's plenty of time to make it
14 specifically ready for Paden City 7th and 8th grade
15 students to stay in Paden City, attend PCES, maintain
16 its junior high activities, and keep our identity. We
17 have a new gymnasium, a nice gymnasium, for these
18 activities. And with football at the high school would
19 be used for any sporting events associated with PCES
20 K-through-8 school. We don't see any legitimate reason
21 why this should not happen. Therefore, the impact
22 statement needs to be rewritten to remove the reference
23 of moving Paden City High School 7th and 8th grader
24 students currently attending Paden City High School be

1 moved to Paden City Elementary. Thank you.

2 MS. FONNER: Pam Witschey.

3 MR. MCPHERSON: I'm going to answer those
4 question. She had some questions. She had questions.
5 They deserve answers, and I can answer them.

6 MS. FONNER: I'm sorry. She walked away.
7 He has an answer to your question.

8 MR. MCPHERSON: Yeah. You can stay up
9 here for your answers if you want.

10 AMANDA ANDERSON: Do you want me to come
11 back up?

12 MR. MCPHERSON: You can if you'd like.

13 AMANDA ANDERSON: I'll come back up.

14 MR. MCPHERSON: So I understand where
15 you're coming from, and I can't say that we didn't think
16 about that. Okay? So please know that that was
17 considered. I can tell you that within the past two
18 weeks, we've struggled at Paden City Elementary School
19 because it looks like we're going to have a couple extra
20 students in one grade come in and we're going to have to
21 separate into two classrooms, and we currently don't
22 know what room we're going to use for that. So that's a
23 problem. And, of course, I also took the time to look
24 at certifications of folks. Now, of course, you know,

1 we could, you know, move some other folks around. But
2 when you look at, you know, what 7th and 8th graders
3 would get certificationwise, there's a few people out
4 there who are unicorns who have multiple certifications
5 and sometimes you can double duty, but when I look at
6 the certifications of the folks who are there who, you
7 know, maybe -- maybe can help out with that, but, you
8 know, if they've bid into a job as a 4th grade teacher,
9 it doesn't really matter if they have a K-8
10 certification, they're a 4th grade teacher and they'd
11 have to want to take that job. But there's just the
12 staffing wouldn't work out quite so well there. But
13 when we look at New Martinsville School in numbers, you
14 know, as far as if we move those students up there,
15 currently in 7th grade at New Martinsville School, they
16 average about 14 kids a section a class period in 7th
17 grade and about 13 kids a section in 8th grade, in core
18 level -- core areas. All the students, the 7th and 8th
19 graders this year, we'll use a number from this year,
20 that average goes up to about 18 and 17. So our class
21 sizes still say -- there's probably some elementary
22 schoolteachers who have 25 kids in their room who would
23 love to have 17. So we did consider it, so thank you.

24 AMANDA ANDERSON: Thank you.

1 MS. FONNER: Okay. Pam Witschey.

2 PAM WITSCHHEY: Tonight, related to our
3 present situation we're dealing with, with the education
4 of youth in Wetzel County, I want to take you on a
5 little journey in history. We're told that if you don't
6 learn from history, you're apt to repeat it. In the
7 mid-'70s, Wetzel County opened the Wetzel County Career
8 Center. It was opened only after several years of
9 planning, property purchased, architects hired, building
10 planned. You get my gist. It was a long process. Not
11 a two-week scare tactic. Not a six-month
12 throw-together. Not even a year of fear. It was a long
13 process of which we are not seeing presently. The
14 finished product, Wetzel County Career Center, was
15 successful for several years. However, after some time
16 and after all the work that went into the successful
17 endeavor, a new superintendent was hired. She had an
18 agenda, and vocational education was not a part of that
19 agenda. Her agenda focused on math and science
20 programs. So instead of looking at the programs at the
21 career center, reevaluating those programs, finding the
22 problems, shoring them up, and making the programs
23 strong again, she began dispersing those programs all
24 over the county to various high schools, and those that

1 she didn't want, she got rid of. She took the Wetzel
2 County Career Center and turned it into the Wetzel
3 County Technology Center, the consideration of students
4 not focusing on math and science in their futures was
5 nil. The needs of so many of Wetzel County students
6 were ignored and neglected. Does that sound familiar?
7 This idea of a technology center became a reality based
8 on the agenda of a few and not on a long-term plan.
9 After a few years, that agenda failed. Wetzel County
10 then had no vocational center and no technology center.
11 Our county was viewed as the antivocational educational
12 county. The needs of students were overlooked, and the
13 needs of the vocational trades in our area, thus, the
14 needs of our communities, were ignored. Again, does
15 that sound familiar? These needs were ignored in the
16 pursuit of an agenda.

17 Today you are all trying to put back together
18 vocational program for Wetzel County in the same
19 building that set fallow for several years, closed due
20 to the selfish agenda of a few people. You were not --
21 you were not a part of that mistake. You were not among
22 those who destroyed an important part of Wetzel County's
23 vocational education opportunities for our children.
24 And here we are 20 years later, you're trying to put

1 things back together. So keep in mind our decisions,
2 your decisions, have lasting effects. We have small
3 schools, an option that's been chosen by Wetzel County
4 citizens many times over the past years. We see our
5 schools faltering in some ways. Why don't we reevaluate
6 our individual schools, shore them up, make them strong
7 again? We can't do that with the chaos that we've seen
8 over the last several months. You're sitting on the
9 opportunity of a lifetime. We don't have to be like
10 everyone else. We don't have to destroy what we have to
11 fulfill the agenda of a few. You are a county that is
12 financially self-sufficient. We have the funds to do
13 miracles in our schools. I have my doubts that any of
14 you will be in the seats that you're sitting in when
15 this endeavor comes to fruition. And by its fruition or
16 completion, I mean the merging of four schools into
17 three and then eventually into one consolidated school
18 as you say you're going to do. And no offense,
19 Mrs. Porter, but I don't think that your long-term
20 agenda is to be superintendent of Wetzel County for a
21 lifetime. I doubt that you will even be here to see
22 that project to its end. What does that mean? That
23 means that the chaos we're seeing right now will have to
24 be addressed by others, people who weren't even involved

1 in this agenda from the onset. If you succeed in your
2 endeavor, more than likely, just as you're trying to
3 rectify the lack of vocational education in Wetzel
4 County due to someone else's lack of foresight years
5 ago, someone else years from now will be trying to
6 rectify the fallacy of what you're doing now. I urge
7 you, if you truly want consolidation in Wetzel County,
8 do it the right way. Let the dust settle from all this
9 chaos, regain the trust and the respect of your
10 citizens, teachers, and students throughout Wetzel
11 County, which has been lost. Do it the right way. Take
12 your time. Do it right and remember consolidation may
13 not even be the best plan for Wetzel County and the
14 needs of its communities. You know and I know, because
15 it's been made public, that much of this process has
16 been based on lies, deceit, and mistrust. Would you
17 want to go into a marriage based on lies, deceit, and
18 mistrust? Of course you wouldn't. You would say such a
19 marriage wouldn't work. Well, that's what you're trying
20 to do. Marry or unite four schools based on lies,
21 deceit, and mistrust with one party, your schools even
22 resisting the unification. It won't work. You have to
23 restart the process being truthful, trustworthy, and
24 open. If you open your eyes --

1 MS. FONNER: Mrs. Witschey.

2 PAM WITSCHEY: -- you can see that you're
3 already started down the road to failure --

4 MS. FONNER: Mrs. Witschey, your time is
5 up.

6 PAM WITSCHEY: You can already see the
7 similarities of this failure. You've lost students.
8 You're going to lose more.

9 MS. FONNER: Do you have any answers to
10 her questions?

11 PAM WITSCHEY: You've lost teachers.
12 You're going to lose more. You've marred the reputation
13 of Wetzel County's successful history of education,
14 you've lost the trust of the people, you've lost the
15 sense of security --

16 MS. FONNER: You need to stop now.

17 PAM WITSCHEY: -- that the people of
18 Wetzel County had in their schools, and you've lost that
19 sense of duty that the people of Wetzel County once felt
20 when they went to the polls to cast their vote.

21 MS. FONNER: Mrs. Witschey, you need to
22 stop now. Your time has been up. Your time has been
23 up.

24 Kelly Sine.

1 KELLY SINE: Good job. I'm going to have
2 a hard time following that.

3 A lot of this stuff I've had to scratch out
4 because people have already hit on this stuff. When you
5 get to work out in the public, you get to speak to a lot
6 of people, and I've heard so many things about this
7 situation. And just yesterday a guy from New
8 Martinsville come up to me and he said, you know, if
9 Magnolia had turf and air conditioning, your meeting
10 wouldn't be happening. What he meant was this is
11 basically all because Magnolia wants turf and they want
12 air conditioning in their gym.

13 I've got four questions. I know no one's
14 asked this first one. We put a work order in over a
15 year ago to have those pennants fixed. When can those
16 pennants be fixed?

17 Number two: Why are you having enhancements
18 and athletic upgrades to Magnolia High School when
19 you're going to build a new school?

20 Number three: What upgrades are you referring
21 to?

22 Number four: When all four current schools
23 are empty, what are you going to do with the school
24 buildings?

1 Number five: Why are you having a board
2 meeting on the final vote on this at 9:00 a.m. on a
3 school day when nobody can attend and two of these board
4 members work day turn?

5 Number six: I was recently told about Morris
6 Farms up on top of 180. It's 64 acres. That's where
7 the kids have prom. The owners of that told me to my
8 face it's for sale, and I told them to call the board
9 office. Morris Farms is actually located in New
10 Martinsville. It's got a 26155 address.

11 And my last question is, Jon kind of already
12 asked it, but there are several coaches here in this gym
13 tonight. Are we going up here? Are we -- are we going
14 to be told, "Forget it. We don't need you"? Or are we
15 going to be able to go to New Martinsville? Thank you.

16 MR. MCPHERSON: We'll check. The
17 maintenance director just walked out for a phone call.
18 I'll check on that.

19 KELLY SINE: Pretty easy fix.

20 MR. MCPHERSON: I don't disagree.

21 If you read the impact statement, you'll see
22 that we will do -- if we end up with two empty schools
23 out of this, our options would be to sell or donate to a
24 community. I've seen -- my personal elementary school

1 was closed in a consolidation, and it became a community
2 center. So that's -- that's one of the options you have
3 there.

4 And then I think we've already stated, and
5 it's in the impact statement, so, you know, we want to
6 keep everybody around. Does that mean we might have a
7 extra folks? It probably does. But it would be nice to
8 go to work every morning and have a few extra folks
9 instead of wondering if we have enough.

10 MS. PORTER: Some of the enhancements
11 that would have to be done would be because for the next
12 five years we still will have students in our buildings
13 and doing athletics. So we know that we will have to do
14 some enhancements so that we can serve our students now,
15 knowing that we'll also be looking forward to building
16 that new complex.

17 KELLY SINE: So are you talking about --
18 you know, Magnolia has a really nice gym. I can't
19 imagine what else could be done with that gym. The
20 football field is beautiful.

21 MS. PORTER: Well, I know one big thing
22 that we've talked about now since I've gotten here is
23 the track at Magnolia. I know that Paden City High
24 School currently comes up and uses the track and

1 Magnolia uses that track, and that track is in disrepair
2 and needs some definite attention. And Mr. Doty and I
3 have talked about that, and we hope to have that done by
4 the spring for our students.

5 KELLY SINE: If I'm not mistaken, I don't
6 think you guys own the track. The track is owned by the
7 City of New Martinsville.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's not right.
9 That's not right.

10 KELLY SINE: That's not right? Okay. My
11 bad.

12 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

13 KELLY SINE: And the vote? Why are you
14 having a meeting at 9:00 a.m.?

15 MS. PORTER: That's normally when we have
16 our special meetings that we vote on.

17 KELLY SINE: How is people --

18 MS. PORTER: These are public hearings
19 tonight, so they're just --

20 KELLY SINE: Have it at 6:00 in the
21 evening when people can attend, when these kids can
22 attend. Right? I mean, is that, like, too much to ask
23 to have it at 6:00 at night? I mean, two of these
24 people work day turn.

1 MS. PORTER: I understand that.

2 KELLY SINE: Morris Farms? Do you know
3 about Morris Farms?

4 MS. PORTER: I know where Morris Farm is,
5 and I know that our kids go to school there, yes.

6 KELLY SINE: Okay. Well, evidently that
7 property is for sale.

8 MS. PORTER: Okay. Who did you say would
9 be contacting me? Did you have somebody in mind?

10 KELLY SINE: I forget her first name.
11 Tex Morris's wife.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Andrea. Andrea.

13 MS. PORTER: Okay. Thank you. That's
14 wonderful. Actually, anybody who has property --

15 KELLY SINE: Because you had mentioned on
16 TV, you had said, if anybody knows of any property for
17 sale, let us know.

18 MS. PORTER: Yes, please.

19 KELLY SINE: Well, you can't get much
20 closer to New Martinsville than right there.

21 MS. PORTER: Yeah. Correct. Correct.
22 Yes, please, anyone, this is a livestream, anyone who
23 has access to property that we can look at and vet,
24 please, we would be more than welcoming of that.

1 KELLY SINE: And our coaching staff here
2 at Paden City High School?

3 MS. PORTER: Yes. We'd rather have more
4 coaches than not enough.

5 KELLY SINE: Okay.

6 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

7 MS. FONNER: Jana Turner.

8 JANA TURNER: Good evening. I don't have
9 to introduce myself. I have spoken several times to you
10 all. The question I'm asking, and I can answer it, why
11 was there poor attendance at the Magnolia public
12 hearing? There were more people who opposed it than
13 there were in favor of it if you took away the faculty
14 of the two schools. Why was there not anybody there?
15 They're not losing anything. They're keeping their
16 community schools. They may gain new students, get a
17 great band, bigger better sports team, and in the end,
18 keeping their identities. But that remains to be seen.

19 This is to the board. How much research --
20 and I know you can't answer the question. Okay? How
21 much research have you-all done concerning pros and cons
22 of consolidating, which is really merging these two
23 schools? I certainly hope you have. But, of course,
24 you aren't allowed to answer any questions. I can't

1 understand that. I know it's a state code. You all
2 were elected by the people for the people. After this
3 public meeting, why aren't you allowed to address the
4 people who you put in office? I've sent e-mails, my
5 husband and I, and numerous other people. Phone calls.
6 And only one ever responded. Thank you, Mr. Glasscock.
7 Christine hasn't been in there long enough to get
8 e-mails from me. On the current board of five members,
9 there are three reps from the New Martinsville area, one
10 from the Reader area, one from the Folsom area. What
11 about Paden City? How fair is that for our community to
12 not have a representative on the board? State Senator
13 Mike Stuart is proposing de-consolidation instead of
14 consolidation. And I quote: School boards aren't
15 spending enough time considering the impacts the closing
16 will have on the surrounding area as well as what it
17 will have on students themselves, end of quote.

18 You could read this through Metro News, the
19 whole article. I suggest you take the time to read this
20 and even look at the articles by Danny Glover from
21 Washington, DC, which states the facts.

22 In conclusion, I just hope and pray when you
23 walk into county office November 22nd at 9 a.m. to vote
24 on this proposal, that you have researched beforehand

1 and not left this up entirely to Superintendent Porter.
2 And remember Senator Stuart's message: School boards
3 aren't spending enough time considering the impact on
4 our students and community. And definitely a few months
5 is not long enough when you're changing so many lives.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. FONNER: Thank you. We'll take a
8 five-minute recess. It's 8:27, so at 8:32 we'll
9 reconvene.

10 -----

11 (Brief break)

12 -----

13 MS. FONNER: Call the hearing back to
14 order at 8:36. Our next speaker is Joey Anderson.

15 JOEY ANDERSON: Good evening. Thank you
16 for having me speak. I'm going to speak logically. I'm
17 taking my emotions out of it, checking them at the door
18 because emotionally, I don't want any of this to happen.
19 Logically, okay, I can see the reasons that you've given
20 for making this move. Don't necessarily agree with
21 them, but I can understand them. My concern tonight is
22 financial. Right now you have some support for
23 consolidation throughout the county. Right now the plan
24 to consolidate Paden City and Magnolia and Valley and

1 Hundred using the existing facilities. If this is the
2 only step and you're going to stay two county schools
3 and build two brand-new schools, okay. But if the
4 ultimate goal which I've heard repeated is to go to one
5 county school, I see this as an unnecessary step. What
6 I foresee in the future is the people of this county
7 never approving another bond levy. Oil and gas money is
8 going to dry up. I foresee students leaving in droves
9 to other counties because we can't pass a bond levy.
10 I've seen it happen in Ohio multiple times. I've seen
11 it happen in this state multiple times where counties
12 can't pass levies. I'm afraid that this could happen
13 eventually in this county because I don't know any
14 student that wants to go to a school for four or five
15 years that's not going to exist after that.

16 I've spoken to many people in this county, out
17 in the county, around the county, north end of the
18 county, and they've all said that they see this is kind
19 of a waste of taxpayer money, this step to go to two and
20 then to one. And the few that I've spoken to have said
21 if this is the way that it's going to be run, they're
22 never voting for another levy. Some of them are very --
23 have a whole lot of property in this county. Not big
24 farms or anything. They just own lots of properties, so

1 they have a huge tax base. Right now their taxes are
2 paying a lot into the levies. But they don't want to
3 see this two to one. And I've seen signs here tonight
4 "One School, One Move." It's not that we're all against
5 consolidation. We're against this to this to this.
6 Find the land. Build the new school.

7 I know that I have e-mailed the board members.
8 I don't know that I've e-mailed Ms. Mitchell because I
9 don't know that she was -- you're the newest one, I
10 think. But I've e-mailed the other four in the past
11 many ideas that I've had, and I'm willing to sit down
12 and talk to any of you away from this meeting about the
13 thousands of ideas that are bouncing around in my head,
14 because most of them are a better idea than what we have
15 right now. I don't think that this two to one is any
16 good for anybody in the county. If we're going to go to
17 one school, bite the bullet and do it. I don't want to
18 see it happen. Like I said, I'm leaving my emotions at
19 the door. Paden City High School is a legacy for me. I
20 didn't graduate from here. Sorry. But it's a legacy
21 for me. My grandfather was one of the five men -- I
22 think five men -- that got this school to be open.
23 There has been someone in my family playing sports in
24 this town for 60 years. I have three family members

1 that were Senior Athlete of the Year, one of them being
2 my son. This school is a legacy to my family. So no, I
3 don't want to see it closed. But I want to leave my
4 emotions at the door. Logically, this two to one, no.
5 Bite the bullet. Do it the right way. As the woman
6 said earlier, follow the example that -- I think it was
7 Roane County; I think that's where Spencer's at --
8 follow the example that they did. We can build new
9 schools. Magnolia High School was built pretty quick.
10 Valley High School was built pretty quick. Hundred High
11 School was built pretty quick. The kids still went to
12 school there when they were building those schools, so
13 it had to be done quick. We can do it. Get the land.
14 Build the school. One school, one move. Do it once
15 and we're done with it. Thank you.

16 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Marlee Amos.

17 MARLEE AMOS: Ladies and gentlemen, thank
18 you for the opportunity to speak this evening. Most of
19 you all know me. My name is Marlee Amos. I'm a current
20 5th grade teacher at New Martinsville School. I was
21 unable to attend the previous meetings held earlier this
22 week due to after-school robotics practice where I'm a
23 coach, so I do appreciate the opportunity to speak
24 tonight in favor of school consolidation, an important

1 step that can enhance educational opportunities, improve
2 resource efficiency, and build stronger communities.

3 By merging schools, we can ensure that all
4 students, regardless of where they live, have access to
5 high-quality teachers, advanced technology, and
6 specialized programs that smaller schools might struggle
7 to provide. Consolidation allows for better allocation
8 of funds, reducing operational costs that can be
9 redirected into classroom resources, extracurricular
10 activities, and even new opportunities for students.
11 With fewer administrative overheads, we can focus on
12 what truly matters: Delivering an enriching educational
13 experience for our children. Moreover, combining
14 schools fosters collaboration and diversity. Students
15 from different backgrounds and communities can come
16 together, learning from one another and building a
17 stronger, more united social network that will serve
18 them well into adulthood. While change can be
19 difficult, consolidation is not about taking away
20 options. It's about strengthening the foundation of
21 education for all students. Let's invest in the future
22 where every child has access to the best possible
23 education no matter where they come from.

24 Our Wetzel County students are already leaving

1 their small community schools. And why? Because better
2 opportunities lie elsewhere not far away. Parents and
3 teacher alike always want what is best for their
4 children. All Wetzel County students deserve better.
5 We have the opportunity to deliver. While many people
6 may not agree on this topic, can we just stop and ask
7 ourselves if we could give our students the advantage of
8 setting them up for greatness, why wouldn't we? Thank
9 you.

10 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Gracelynn Wyatt.

11 GRACELYNN WYATT: Good evening, board
12 members, administrators, fellow students, staff, and
13 concerned persons. My name is Gracelynn Wyatt, and
14 tonight I address you not only as a concerned student,
15 but the class president for the 7th grade. This is our
16 first year in school -- in this school, but that doesn't
17 mean we don't have feelings and concerns about it.
18 Today, during our flex period, one of our free class
19 periods, our teachers encouraged us to ask questions
20 about the meeting tonight and write down our own
21 thoughts. The following thoughts are on our behalf of
22 myself and my classmates: This school is more what you
23 think it is. This school is a family. I've been for
24 this school for one year. I've never seen such a school

1 where people stick up for one another, no matter who you
2 are. If you combine schools, it could increase fights.
3 It could not be safe. It will not be safe.

4 For the -- this last years have one of the
5 best years of my life. I'm not just speaking for me.
6 I'm speaking for the kids, the teachers, and our county,
7 our community in Paden City. This school is home to us,
8 and you want to take it away from us. If you shut down
9 our school, these kids will go to Tyler or homeschool.
10 Not just Paden City. New Martinsville kids too. Think
11 about how this makes us feel. All of you care about the
12 money. But this school, it's not just about the money.
13 This school, this one school I've been to for almost two
14 years, my first time in the middle school, I have not
15 felt more loved in my life, and I never want to leave
16 this school. This school is filled with love and
17 happiness, and you guys want to take it away from us.

18 I believe that Paden City deserves to stay
19 open. What are your plans for the property after you
20 take it down? What are you guys going to do when you
21 take our home from us? Do you know the importance of
22 this school to us? Why do you want to do this? Do you
23 know that you're putting us -- do you know what you're
24 putting us through, how this can affect our mental

1 health? And as someone who has struggled with mental
2 health for a while, this is making it ten times worse.
3 Not just for me, but everyone else who has struggled
4 through mental health. My friends know what I've been
5 through. Other people that I don't even know, know what
6 I have been through. You don't know what it's like to
7 have a school ripped away from you that you love,
8 because you're not us. You're not Paden City. You
9 don't know what all of these -- if we could do a
10 petition, we could outvote all of you and we would win
11 to keep our school open. It's reason after reason on
12 why you want to take our school away from us. When is
13 it going to end? When? Doesn't make sense.

14 Do you think this is a good idea? Because
15 none of us think it is. None of us believe that it is a
16 good idea at all.

17 Do you realize the pain and confusion that you
18 have caused on us, that are still caused?

19 The first time I was at a meeting for this, I
20 didn't even go to Paden City, but both my sisters do and
21 did at the time. They still do. One is a senior. One
22 is a sophomore. I didn't want to go to Paden City
23 because I didn't want to leave my old school, and I have
24 went to New Martinsville for six years and then I have

1 also been to Tyler for one year. This is my second year
2 in -- this is my first year in 7th grade. Last year I
3 was at the elementary school. Best two years that I
4 ever had in my life.

5 One of my classmates said this, and this is
6 her first year in Paden City: This is why I think you
7 shouldn't merge schools. This is why you should keep
8 Paden City open. This school and the people have truly
9 turned my life around. This school -- the people in
10 this school has made me smile, made me feel more
11 confident with myself. It has made me become more
12 confident in myself, making me a better and nicer
13 person. I have so many good friends, and I had just
14 gotten here. Everyone is so nice to me, and it makes me
15 feel good about me in general. I'm so much happier.

16 And this last part really gets to me. This is
17 why I want to go to school now. Obviously, at her old
18 school she was not doing well, but this -- this school
19 is why she wants to be here. She wants to keep going on
20 and learning, and we need a better education. And if
21 we merge schools together, that's not going to happen.
22 I think what you're doing is wrong. Paden City School
23 has been open for a long time. It's the best school for
24 me and other kids.

1 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Did you have
2 questions to answer?

3 GRACELYNN WYATT: My first question is
4 what are your plans for the property moving forward
5 after you shut us down? What are your plans to do with
6 this property?

7 MS. PORTER: The property would be
8 auctioned off, sold, or donated.

9 GRACELYNN WYATT: So for money. Okay.
10 Do you know the importance of this school?

11 MS. FONNER: Could you repeat that?

12 GRACELYNN WYATT: Do you know the
13 importance of this school to us? Do you know why we
14 want to keep it?

15 MS. PORTER: I think that's a subjective
16 question, and we have heard why and we are compassionate
17 to those reasons.

18 GRACELYNN WYATT: But are you? Because
19 it seems not just to me, but for a lot of people here
20 that this just seems it's all for money. That's what it
21 seems like.

22 MS. FONNER: Were those all of your
23 questions?

24 GRACELYNN WYATT: Why do you think it's a

1 good idea?

2 MS. PORTER: We do have a copy of the
3 impact statement, if you would like to review it.

4 GRACELYNN WYATT: Do you realize the pain
5 and confusion that you've all caused us? Because one
6 minute it's open, then it's shut, and then it's open,
7 and then we don't know what's going on.

8 MS. PORTER: I really do appreciate you
9 speaking to us tonight. A lot of your questions are
10 subjective.

11 GRACELYNN WYATT: Okay.

12 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Becky Hayes.

13 BECKY HAYES: Well, here I am again. You
14 all should know me by now. Paden City is our go-to
15 place. We have no other entertainment. Hope you-all
16 sleep well tonight knowing that you will take away the
17 only life we have. I hope that gavel finds you peace.

18 MS. FONNER: The next speaker is
19 Mackenzie Simpkins.

20 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: Hello. Sorry if I
21 sound awful. I've been sick. Hi. My name is Mackenzie
22 Simpkins, and I am a senior here at Paden City High
23 School. I am the senior class president, and I hope
24 that today I can represent some of my fellow classmates.

1 I participate in many things, including marching,
2 concert, jazz, and pep band. I'm also a co-section
3 leader with one of the most incredible drum lines in the
4 state. I am also in softball, track, volleyball,
5 Thespians, and National Honor Society. I've had plenty
6 of experience doing these things that I can never
7 imagine losing.

8 Today I am beyond proud to stand in the
9 footsteps of my great grandfather, Owen McKay, and my
10 grandfather, Frank McKay, a 1973 graduate, who both
11 fought for this school in the past.

12 Now that I've talked about me. Let's talk
13 about us. My first point is I'm trying to look forward
14 into my future and what may come next for me. I know
15 where I'm going to college and what I am doing, but I
16 can't help but to worry for my underclassmen friends who
17 aren't sure what their future holds. I've rethought my
18 future plans to become a teacher because of this summer.
19 That says a lot. I've also lost many teachers that I
20 love dearly because of this poor excuse of a
21 consolidation. Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Massey, Coach Barcus,
22 Mr. Riggle, and Mrs. Householder to name a few. So,
23 yes, I have lost some opportunities because of you. Not
24 because of PCHS, but because of you. You keep saying

1 that you are doing the best for your students and that
2 you have been doing so for 30-something years, but when
3 we tell you that this is not what is best for us, you
4 ignore that.

5 My first question is do you think that the
6 board of education could have done better with the
7 communication of these topics?

8 On your part, do you admit that there have
9 been many lies or misinformation towards Paden City High
10 School and Paden City High School students?

11 My fourth point is, don't get me wrong when I
12 say that I am against a merger, I am against merging
13 schools, but I'm not entirely against a true
14 consolidation. I think that a consolidation can be
15 beneficial in many ways, but I also think it can be
16 harmful in some ways. If this is done correctly, it
17 could lead to great things. But the way that we are
18 talking about going about this just doesn't seem right
19 to me. We need new everything for everyone.

20 My second question is are there any negatives
21 of consolidation that you have looked into and that you
22 are willing to share? There seems to be many positives
23 spoken about, but what are the negatives that could
24 affect students and teachers on both sides?

1 My third question is if you could go back to
2 this summer, would you change the way you did anything?
3 What would you have done differently from your current
4 perspective, and do you have any regrets?

5 Please keep in mind how mentally challenging
6 this summer was for some students. Some didn't really
7 care much and some cared so much that it caused their
8 mental health to rapidly decline. And if you don't
9 mind, I would appreciate a plan to prevent that for your
10 future decisions. Thank you.

11 MS. PORTER: Thank you, Mackenzie. I'm
12 sorry you don't feel good, dear. Of course, it's a
13 change, so some people do see that as a negative. In
14 life, we do have to go through changes. Like you said,
15 you're going to attend college next year. That will be
16 a big change in your life, and you'll probably go
17 through many changes throughout your life. I know
18 probably all of us adults in this building have had
19 changes. So, yes, a negative right now is consolidation
20 because consolidation is the change and the uncertainty
21 of what's happening and the ups and downs.

22 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: The uncertainty is
23 the problem. We would like some certainty.

24 MS. PORTER: Sure.

1 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: It's very uncertain.

2 MS. PORTER: Yes.

3 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: And it's an issue.

4 MS. PORTER: We really do hope to get
5 that cleared up, trust built, moving in the right
6 direction. Maybe one day after you're finished with
7 college and your degree and your career, you'll choose
8 to come back to Wetzel County and maybe start --

9 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: Probably not.
10 Honestly, probably not. Anywhere but Wetzel County at
11 this point, if I'm being honest.

12 MS. PORTER: Well, we all have choices,
13 so, yes, of course.

14 I know you've brought up about the summer and
15 regrets. I regret causing any harm on anybody, any ill
16 feelings on anyone. I don't know that anyone in this
17 room, probably, besides the people sitting up front,
18 maybe a few people in the audience understand what
19 actually went through in all the -- all that was
20 involved in shutting down the school because of the
21 situation. So that's a whole 'nother topic which we
22 probably shouldn't talk about tonight because it's not
23 part of our issue tonight.

24 So do I have regrets? I'd like to think that

1 I'm always looking for the best for students and not
2 having any regrets.

3 Can we change things? Sure. We're all human.
4 We all can do things differently looking back. Again, I
5 meant no ill harm or ill will on anyone.

6 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: Can I ask about why
7 I found out through Facebook, why it wasn't said at the
8 end of the year?

9 MS. PORTER: That's probably something we
10 shouldn't talk about tonight. It's not on our agenda,
11 but you can see me after --

12 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: Or e-mail.

13 MS. PORTER: Yeah, please e-mail me. And
14 I'll be down to see you guys.

15 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: It kind of sucked
16 finding out from Facebook, if I'm being honest. That
17 was quite --

18 MS. PORTER: Thank you for being honest.

19 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: Could have been
20 better.

21 MS. PORTER: I appreciate that.

22 MACKENZIE SIMPKINS: So let's fix that.

23 MS. PORTER: Thank you.

24 MS. FONNER: The next speaker is Hannah

1 Clark.

2 HANNAH CLARK: Bear with me, southern
3 folks. I moved here from the midwest. I'm going to
4 talk fast.

5 Good evening, everyone. My name is Hannah
6 Clark, and I live in Paden City. I did not grow up
7 here, and I have never attended school here. In fact,
8 when I first arrived, I was very quietly pro
9 consolidation. So while there are plenty of people here
10 who are deeply qualified to give you impassioned
11 speeches about how much they love this school and this
12 town, I don't have that resume. What I do have, as
13 usual, are a few things I've read that changed my mind
14 and that I think you should know. First, I read a study
15 on school consolidations in rural Nebraska. This study
16 has been endorsed by the National Council of Professors
17 of Educational Administration. One of the primary
18 concerns in this study is the idea of social capital.
19 Interestingly, also a topic in our shared county book
20 study this year. In places with high social capital
21 where residents trust other people, join organizations,
22 volunteer, vote, and socialize, there are healthier
23 children, fewer teen pregnancies, less violence, and
24 less crime. However, quote, when community interests

1 were ignored during consolidation proceedings,
2 absenteeism and community disintegration increased as
3 social capital was eroded and schools were no longer
4 seen as contributors to the local community as the best
5 and brightest students were being shipped away. In
6 these communities, an earlier round of consolidations
7 had already had damaging effects in the 1960s.
8 Residents reported closed businesses, fewer social
9 connections between neighbors, loss of young adults from
10 the community, and difficulty in replacing aging town
11 doctors, accountants, and other key professions. The
12 study goes so far as to say that respondents simply
13 accepted the fact that their communities would never
14 recover. What does that matter? Are these tiny
15 communities acceptable collateral damage? President
16 Thomas Jefferson didn't think so. As paraphrased by
17 this study, Jefferson understood that informal small
18 networks of civic engagement and community organizations
19 are what inspire cooperation and mutual responsibility.
20 And what are these informal networks? The very ties of
21 social capital created by having a public school in your
22 community. The study concludes that although students
23 will inevitably socially adjust to consolidation while
24 they're in school, as kids do, they will be less likely

1 to return to their home communities as contributing
2 members afterward, and the community as a whole will
3 decline. Moreover, the author aptly compares rural
4 communities like this one to canaries in a coal mine.
5 As we go, others will follow. Ignore at your own peril.

6 Okay. So consolidation is bad for this town
7 because, you know, we're the one losing our school, but
8 the kids will adjust; right? The study said so. And
9 the quality of a consolidated education is too good to
10 pass up. Right? Well, let's take a look at another
11 study, this one from rural Canada. Just like in the
12 U.S., consolidation has been pushed through rural
13 Canadian districts by powerful, wealthy outsiders with
14 no stakes in the survival of their respective
15 communities. They, too, push a narrative of small-town
16 backwardness and ignorance and insist there is no
17 legitimate resistance to consolidation efforts. But
18 this study by Barbara Barter of the Memorial University
19 of Newfoundland, available upon request, found that
20 system administrators often simply refuse to acknowledge
21 counter arguments and instead push a single-minded
22 narrative that denies the complexities of reality.
23 Moreover, Barter posits that although often ignored,
24 teachers are in a unique position to both observe and

1 express the on-the-ground realities for themselves and
2 their students. So what did teachers report in these
3 newly consolidated classrooms? One, longer commutes
4 made it more difficult for teachers to invest in
5 coaching and administering other extracurricular
6 activities; two, transportation difficulties, as well as
7 long bus rides, led to students and families becoming
8 less engaged in school activities and events, even among
9 those who were extremely involved pre-consolidation;
10 three, students who live in outlying communities are
11 more likely to be affected by local issues such as
12 flooding or road closures that lead them to missing
13 school days that other students are still able to
14 attend; number four, changes in teaching duties,
15 courses, classrooms, et cetera, creates just as much
16 upheaval for students as teachers, including teachers
17 reporting spending more time planning, differentiating,
18 assessing, and grading outside of their contract hours;
19 five, schools built in out-of-the-way places in an
20 effort to serve multiple communities experienced higher
21 staff turnover rates as community ties became strained
22 and weakened; number six, many teachers refrain from
23 speaking out about these realities because they fear
24 retaliation.

1 I could continue, but just in closing, don't
2 just listen to these community members and business
3 owners and students who love this little town and then
4 go home thinking you can discount them all as backwards,
5 ignorant, or selfish. The facts don't support
6 consolidation, either. So beware. The vision you're
7 following may turn out to be a mirage.

8 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Our next speaker
9 is Johanna McGinnis.

10 JOHANNA MCGINNIS: Good evening,
11 everyone. First off, I'd like to say that I was born
12 and raised in Wetzel County. I attended Wetzel County
13 Schools. I graduated from Magnolia. The main thing I
14 always heard the entire time that I've associated with
15 the school in Magnolia was how we didn't need four
16 schools in the county. Wetzel County does not need more
17 schools, especially when Paden City and Wetzel County
18 are in such close proximity to each other. Besides
19 that, Paden City is so small, the community is so small,
20 they'll never make it. They can't do anything. They're
21 too small to accomplish anything. Well, let me put it
22 this way, and goodness knows I'm stating my age when I
23 say this, that was over 48 years ago. Paden City High
24 School is still proudly here. Not only are they still

1 here, but they're still producing students who have
2 become lawyers, doctors, proud members of our community
3 willing to help in any way they can to help our school
4 and our community. You name it. They're there. You
5 don't have to ask. They volunteer, as you can see from
6 the turnout you had tonight.

7 The main thing I keep hearing is how much
8 bigger and better Magnolia will be. Not Valley. Not
9 Hundred. Not Paden City High School. Magnolia. With
10 whatever name you choose to call it.

11 The information that I've gotten and that's
12 been spoken about tonight is also that the change is
13 still pretty much up in the air as to whether there will
14 be a change in the name, mascot, colors, whatever. The
15 last meeting, you know -- well, let me say this. I want
16 to ask you at what cost is all this going to come? And
17 I don't mean moneywise. I mean at the last meeting
18 where they only had two speakers for consolidation, one
19 of those speakers said he had a real -- and this is
20 quoting -- he had a real problem with someone saying
21 that if a school shuts down, the town goes with it, and
22 it's not the school's responsibility for a city's
23 success or failures. He couldn't be more wrong. Let me
24 ask you, how can a city succeed if there's nothing to

1 draw people to it? Without our school and the revenue
2 it brings, then what happens? We don't have Walmart, we
3 don't have theaters, we don't have the regatta like New
4 Martinsville does. We have our school. Our school is
5 our community, and our community is our school.

6 During the drought, when Valley was having
7 their water issues, Mrs. Porter, you made a statement in
8 the news that how important Valley is to that community.
9 You said how important a school is for a community to
10 survive. Your words were "Valley High School is a big
11 part of community. Our number one goal is taking care
12 of the students and also taking care of the community as
13 well." This is your quote from the Intelligencer on
14 November the 2nd. My question is, so how is our high
15 school and our community any less important? People
16 want to live where their kids can attend school, not to
17 be bussed to another town, and why would they? Why
18 wouldn't they just live in the other town? And what
19 about those that have more than one child? Is the child
20 in the elementary school going to want to have their
21 sibling going to a different town? No. I can answer
22 that. And the reason I can answer that is because I
23 have talked to other parents who have children in that
24 exact situation. They have some in the elementary

1 school and some in the high school. And they were told,
2 Mommy, if they go to the other school, I don't want to
3 be down here. I want to be at that school. I want to
4 be at that area where they're at because it wouldn't be
5 the same. That's not fair. That's not fair to those
6 kids. And the thing is, while I'm on the subject, with
7 say you go ahead with this merger and the students move
8 up from the elementary to the high school and we have no
9 high school. Well, my question is this: What will
10 happen as our elementary school attendance dwindles?
11 Then what happens? Will our elementary school also get
12 shut down? Then what will happen to our community?
13 What's left of it by then?

14 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

15 I ask the audience to please make sure you're
16 not talking during somebody's presentation. Thank you.

17 Our next speaker is Tiffany Hayes.

18 TIFFANY HAYES: Good evening. I'm
19 Tiffany Hayes, and my son is Dalton Hayes. I have to
20 say I've stayed rather quiet through all of this while
21 still supporting my son. However, this past couple of
22 days, I've gone back and forth on whether or not to
23 speak, ultimately deciding I cannot stay quiet any
24 longer. Even though I know you're all aware of who my

1 son is, I have to ask, do you really know him? If you
2 do, then you know he is extremely outgoing, happy,
3 dedicated, driven, caring. I could go on and on.
4 Lately, though, the past two months specifically, he has
5 really struggled, to the point where I've had his
6 friends, trusted adults, and teachers reach out to me.
7 I'm thankful that he has these people in his life that
8 care the way they do. My husband and I have seen the
9 change, and we are dealing with it as a family. I'm
10 here to say that what you're doing is detrimental to the
11 mental well-being of these students, my son as an
12 example. To say I am upset is an understatement. I
13 have felt all the feelings: Upset, anger,
14 disappointment, disgust. Because, truthfully, I don't
15 think you have these students' best interests at heart.
16 You can't, or you would understand and realize that you
17 are going about this the wrong way. While my son has
18 kept his grades up and he's still dedicated to his work,
19 the fire is just not there this year. So far, his whole
20 junior year has been overshadowed with constant fear of
21 the future. Do you know how upsetting it is to see your
22 once positive and sure-of-life child resort to being
23 scared, unsure, and worried every single day? He has
24 worried himself so much that he's lost almost 20 pounds

1 in the last six weeks. It's absolutely heartbreaking.
2 You all need to do better. You're hurting our children.

3 I'm not opposed to a consolidation. I know
4 people don't want to hear that, but I believe a
5 consolidation is what needs to happen for all students
6 to have a greater opportunity for a better education.
7 With that being said, though, what you are doing is not
8 a true consolidation. A consolidation involves a plan
9 and time. It does not happen overnight. It does not
10 happen in a year. A consolidation involves a new
11 building with a new name, colors, and mascot. It's an
12 even playing field and fresh start for all students and
13 staff involved. It's one school and one move. We
14 shouldn't have to watch our son fret his whole junior
15 year away and worry himself sick about what his senior
16 year is going to be. I know you've heard it over and
17 over again, and I can't help but wonder if you take any
18 of it in. But please consider what you are doing and do
19 better. Do better for all the students and staff who
20 are involved because they truly deserve it. And I need
21 to add to this -- Ms. Porter, I do not mean any
22 disrespect when I say it -- but please do not say that
23 my son does not understand what's going on. He
24 understands it, he lives it, and he feels it deeply.

1 And that is why we are where we are today. Thank you
2 all.

3 MS. FONNER: Thank you. The next speaker
4 is Joshua Musgrave.

5 JOSHUA MUSGRAVE: Ma'am, I already spoke.

6 MS. FONNER: Thank you. He's listed on
7 here twice. Okay. The last person to speak tonight is
8 Weldon Williams.

9 WELDON WILLIAMS: Hard to believe when
10 they told me that I spoke to the board of education
11 14 years ago addressing this same problem and same
12 issue, so here we are again. Mrs. Porter, you don't
13 know me. The rest -- everybody else behind the counter
14 there knows who I am. I've worked with and volunteered
15 with 99 percent of them. So just so you know, I am the
16 local funeral director, you know. I have gone to West
17 Liberty. I have a bachelor of science, bachelor of
18 arts. One of them is in education, business education.
19 I've been in this county for 27 years with businesses,
20 multiple businesses. So I do have some understanding,
21 and the complaint -- or not the complaint -- the pleas
22 tonight have been many. Mine is that of economics.
23 Okay? I don't know that we've talked about that enough
24 tonight. So in all the classes that I had at West

1 Liberty, the first thing that they drilled into your
2 head was location, location, location. And if you've
3 ever had a business class, I'm sure it was drilled into
4 your head. I picked my locations. I picked three
5 communities to be in: New Martinsville, Pine Grove, and
6 Paden City. Because each one of them were their own
7 little communities and they function very well. Not
8 saying that Hundred doesn't, but I just don't feel like
9 traveling across four hills to get to Hundred.

10 The other thing that was drilled into my head
11 was that for it to be a community, it has to have four
12 components. It has to have a store, and that's
13 someplace where you can either go pick up quick
14 incidentals or it's a store big enough that it supplies
15 all your grocery needs. It has to have a church,
16 someplace where you can go exercise your religious
17 beliefs. A post office, some way you can get packages
18 in and out of the community. And I understand that's
19 changing a little with UPS and FedEx and so forth, but
20 the concept is still there. And the fourth and last
21 thing is a school. If you remove any one of those
22 components, it is not very long before it's no longer a
23 community. It's just a dot on the map. Most of you
24 have been around since the consolidation back in the

1 late '60s, early '70s. And if you think about it, these
2 are nothing but dots on the map. Grandview, Littleton,
3 Burton, Folsom, Smithfield, Jacksonburg, and Earnshaw.
4 Because of all the consolidations, we went from all
5 those communities down to four communities. If we
6 consolidate again, there will be no communities because
7 you're going to end up putting schools out in the middle
8 of the country somewhere, and there's no communities
9 there.

10 If you'd have told me when I was in school
11 that I would have been crazy enough to go three quarters
12 of a million dollars in debt based upon communities, I
13 would have told you you were nuts. Here I am, and I'm
14 still paying on that three quarter of a million dollars.
15 I'd like to see the end of that loan term and not have
16 to struggle or not have to wonder and worry how I'm
17 going to pay that huge, huge debt.

18 I gave each one of you a copy of the
19 Innformer, and it was funny, when Rodney asked me to
20 address the board, that there is an article in there,
21 page 4A, that you need to read, somebody that's not from
22 Wetzel County talking about when you do a consolidation,
23 you have fewer students, you have a lower property
24 value, and a lower tax base. I don't know that that's

1 something we can afford. Thank you.

2 MS. FONNER: Thank you, Weldon.

3 KELLY SINE: I'm sorry. I misspoke.

4 MS. FONNER: Okay.

5 KELLY SINE: My notes were kind of
6 scribblish. My memory was kind of bad. Morris Farms is
7 not for sale.

8 MS. FONNER: Okay.

9 MS. PORTER: Good to know.

10 KELLY SINE: I had a conversation with
11 them, and I brought -- I brought it up to them that the
12 county is looking for land. And I want to apologize to
13 everybody here. Boys, this is adversity. Sometimes you
14 make mistakes. I didn't mean to say that the property
15 is for sale. I apologize to the Morris family. And it
16 is a beautiful piece of property, and it would make a
17 nice place for a school. I'm sorry.

18 MS. FONNER: That's okay. Thank you for
19 clearing that up. I believe that's the end of our
20 delegations to speak, unless I missed somebody on the
21 list. Is there anyone else that had signed up? What's
22 your name?

23 SHAUNA WILLIAMS-YOHO: Shauna
24 Williams-Yoho.

1 MS. FONNER: Okay, Shauna. Come on up.

2 SHAUNA WILLIAMS-YOHO: Good evening. My
3 name is Shauna Williams-Yoho, and I am a graduate of
4 Paden City High School. At this present time, I am
5 president of the Paden City High School Alumni
6 Association. A successful school doesn't end its
7 relationship with the students upon graduation. Rather
8 than forgetting the graduates, a school should want to
9 see its legacy live and help those who have walked its
10 halls and become successful citizens. One very
11 important way a school maintains a connection with its
12 graduates is through alumni association. I realize that
13 not all schools, and especially larger ones, enjoy the
14 benefits of an alumni association. In fact, it's often
15 smaller schools who work extra hard to maintain their
16 associations. In Paden City, our alumni association was
17 formed a few short years after the first graduates
18 received their diplomas in 1952 and has been active ever
19 since. The association has participated in school
20 events and sponsored activities for the students for
21 decades, including awarded scholarships to graduating
22 seniors. But perhaps more importantly, the alumni
23 association offers a permanent connection between
24 students, graduates, school, and community that can't be

1 replaced. When a school closes, the alumni association
2 slowly diminishes and some even, as alumni die off, the
3 school dies too. Furthermore, the loyalty doesn't
4 automatically transfer to the new school. The graduates
5 of the new school are responsible for establishing their
6 own alumni association. The sad truth is when schools
7 consolidate, the alumni association often never gets off
8 the ground. We know a situation just like this in a
9 neighboring county where a consolidated school has
10 existed for 30 years and yet there is little or no
11 evidence of an active alumni association. Alumni
12 associates offer a way for graduates of the school to
13 unite and reunite. Graduates from different decades and
14 even different generations. The Paden City Alumni
15 Association has members that represent children,
16 parents, and grandparents of the same families. It's a
17 multigenerational organization that doesn't get replaced
18 or reestablished in a few years. It takes decades and
19 lifetimes to get to where the Paden City Alumni
20 Association is today.

21 In closing, PCHS will slowly and very
22 methodically turn that clock the other way, and with
23 each passing year, the association, on all the goodness
24 it has accomplished for the students, school, graduates,

1 and community, will erode away until it's just a memory.
2 So closing a school building and moving the students
3 that attend to another school in another town does more
4 than shutter a physical piece of property. It forever
5 breaks paths of connectivity, it destroys support
6 systems, and it hastens the decay of a physical
7 community and its elastic of the community.

8 I would say in closing, as a past graduate and
9 president, again, of the alumni association, I feel it
10 is time that we unite and keep Wetzel County Schools as
11 they are, a blessing, a blessing that they have been and
12 will continue to be for all future generations.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MS. FONNER: Thank you. I want to say I
15 do apologize for missing your name on the list.

16 SHAUNA WILLIAMS-YOHO: Thank you.

17 MS. FONNER: Is there anyone else?

18 Okay. So then at this time I make the motion
19 for adjournment. Is there a second?

20 Motion made by Mrs. Fonner. Seconded by
21 Mrs. Nice. All those in favor say aye.

22 (Chorus of ayes.)

23 MS. FONNER: Aye. Opposed? Motion
24 carries unanimously. We are adjourned at 9:22.

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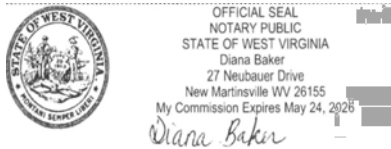
(The hearing was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.)

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THE STATE OF :
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 : SS: C E R T I F I C A T E
COUNTY OF WETZEL :

I, DIANA BAKER, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the proceedings within were by me reduced to stenotype; afterwards reduced to Computer-Aided Transcription under my direction and control; that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings within.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office in New Martinsville, West Virginia, on the 21st day of November, 2024.



Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia

My Commission expires:
May 24, 2026

	accordance (2) 8:19;9:2	125:23;126:8	10:12,15;32:21; 110:4,5;120:12,12,13	40:5;53:17;61:20; 84:2;91:8
\$	according (2) 77:4;79:23	adjustments (1) 6:15	age (2) 63:21;128:22	alternative (5) 18:5;19:20;76:13, 15,18
\$12.8 (1) 32:19	accountability (1) 75:15	administering (1) 127:5	agenda (15) 25:17;33:4;44:13, 13;96:18,19,19;97:8, 9,16,20;98:11,20; 99:1;123:10	although (2) 125:22;126:23
\$20,000 (1) 70:22	accountants (1) 125:11	administration (6) 3:15;32:11;33:11; 65:22;72:4;124:17	aging (1) 125:10	Altogether (1) 35:8
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\$5.3 (1) 32:17	acid (2) 67:2,2	administrator (1) 27:21	agree (3) 23:23;108:20;113:6	always (6) 21:3;52:12;58:14; 113:3;123:1;128:14
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WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Public Hearing Held on Nov. 13, 2024 at Magnolia H.S.

DELEGATION – PUBLIC COMMENT
SIGN-UP SHEET

All delegations shall hold their presentations to not more than five (5) minutes. Delegations may not discuss matters that involve student privacy, confidentiality, or matters related to specific employees. The Board president has the authority to restrict any presentation which becomes personal, abusive, or inappropriate. – WCS Policy: BDDH

Please print clearly

- ✓ Anissa Anderson
- ✓ Melody Wells
- ✓ Stacy Upbro
- ✓ Mike TURNER
- ✓ Rodney McWilliams
- ✓ Joel Potts
- ✓ Amy Witschey
- ~~Debbie Williams~~

In The Matter Of:

*Closure of Paden City High School And Its
Consolidation Into Magnolia High School, et al.*

*Public Hearing Magnolia High School
November 13, 2024*

*WV Depos
2413 East Pike Street, Suite 119
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26301*

Original File Hearing Magnolia.txt

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WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC HEARING

RE: CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL
AND ITS CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL
AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

The following proceedings were stenographically recorded by and before Diana Baker, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of West Virginia, at Magnolia High School, 601 Maple Avenue, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

APPEARANCES

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- Cassandra Porter, Superintendent
- Ben McPherson, Chief Personnel Officer
- Jeff Lancaster, Treasurer
- Todd Barcus, Attendance Director/
Student Services Director
- JoBeth Simmons, Executive Secretary

- Wetzel County Board of Education Members
- Linda Fonner, President
- Brian Castilow, Vice President
- Jimmy Glasscock, Member
- Christine Nice, Member
- Christine Mitchell, Member

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MS. FONNER: I call this special meeting
3 of the Wetzel County Board of Education to order. We'll
4 begin with the Pledge of Allegiance led by
5 Mrs. Mitchell, followed by a moment of silence.

6 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

7 (Moment of silence observed.)

8 MS. FONNER: You may be seated.

9 Let it be noted that all five board members
10 are here in attendance: Mr. Glasscock, Mr. Castilow,
11 Mrs. Fonner, Mrs. Nice, and Mrs. Mitchell.

12 Tonight is a hearing on the closure of Paden
13 City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia
14 High School and New Martinsville School. In accordance
15 with West Virginia Policy 6204 and Wetzel County School
16 Policy BDDH, each speaker will be allotted a maximum of
17 five minutes to present their remarks. This policy
18 ensures that all individuals have equal opportunity to
19 address the board in a fair and timely manner. During
20 the five-minute speaking period, any questions or
21 clarifications raised by the speaker will not be
22 addressed immediately. Instead, in accordance with
23 Policy 6204 3.4.a.8, all questions will be answered at
24 the conclusion of the speaker's allotted time. This

1 structure helps maintain order and ensures that each
2 speaker has the full opportunity to present their view
3 without interruption and that they are able to use the
4 entire 5 minutes they are entitled to. We ask that all
5 participants respect this time limitation to facilitate
6 an orderly and efficient meeting. Also, we ask that
7 everyone remain respectful and not make this personal.
8 The board president has the authority to maintain order
9 at all of the meetings. The comments that are to be
10 made are to be made to the board and not to the
11 audience. The board is not responsible for speaker
12 comments. The speakers are responsible for their own
13 comments. And I want to add that the board members are
14 not allowed to answer the questions. They will be
15 sitting up here quietly, we will be. However,
16 Mrs. Porter and her staff may be called upon to answer
17 questions.

18 All right, then. We'll get started with our
19 summary of proposed action presented by administration.

20 MS. PORTER: Good evening, Mrs. Fonner,
21 and members of the board and the audience from Wetzel
22 County. Tonight I would like to give my opening
23 statement.

24 Wetzel County Schools is at a crossroads,

1 facing significant demographic challenges that require
2 thoughtful consideration and strategic action. The
3 population of Wetzel County has declined by 16.6 percent
4 since 2010, from 16,537 to an estimated 13,786 in 2024,
5 outpacing both the national growth rate of 7.7 percent
6 and the 4.3 percent decline seen in West Virginia.
7 Correspondingly, student enrollment in Wetzel County has
8 dropped by approximately 800 students over the same
9 period, placing pressure on our schools and their
10 ability to provide a robust educational experience for
11 all students.

12 Magnolia High School and Paden City High
13 School, both located in riverfront communities in Wetzel
14 County, together accounting for about two-thirds of the
15 county's total student enrollment, over the last decade,
16 both schools have experienced substantial declines in
17 enrollment. Magnolia High School, which served 420
18 students in 2014, has seen that number drop to 303
19 students in the '23-'24 school year. Similarly, Paden
20 City High School, which had 127 students in Grades 9
21 through 12 ten years ago, is now down to just 107. This
22 ongoing enrollment decline reflected in the '24-'25
23 school year figures, 286 students at Magnolia and 96 at
24 Paden City, has led to the proposal to consolidate these

1 schools and integrate the 7th and 8th grades in New
2 Martinsville School. This consolidation is a proactive
3 response to the diminishing student populations and
4 underutilized facilities. New Martinsville School,
5 while also experiencing fluctuations in enrollment, has
6 significant unused capacity and will absorb the
7 additional students from Paden City without surpassing
8 its capacity of 1309 students.

9 When it comes to the physical infrastructures
10 of our schools, the need for upgrades is clear.
11 Magnolia High School, with its size and better
12 facilities, requires approximately 16.6 million in
13 improvements, including HVAC upgrades and enhancements
14 to athletic facilities. In contrast, Paden City High
15 School's more limited site would require about
16 7.5 million in renovations to meet even basic standards.
17 However, the small size of Paden City campus and its
18 limited room for expansion make it an unsustainable
19 long-term option. Magnolia's larger, more versatile
20 campus, with necessary improvements, provides a stronger
21 foundation for meeting future educational needs.

22 From a financial standpoint, the proposed
23 consolidation offers significant savings. Wetzel County
24 Schools anticipates an annual savings of \$358,722,

1 primarily from reduced utility and maintenance costs at
2 the closed Paden City High School. While staffing
3 levels will remain unchanged both across professional
4 and service personnel, operational costs will be
5 optimized to this consolidation, ensuring more efficient
6 uses of our resources. This restructuring will allow
7 the county to better allocate funds, ensuring the
8 continued sustainability of Magnolia High School and
9 addressing financial inefficiencies tied to
10 underenrolled schools.

11 A key benefit of this consolidation is that it
12 will not result in job losses. Teachers particularly
13 will benefit from reduced class preparation burdens,
14 allowing them to focus on fewer courses and offer a
15 broader array of electives. This also allows for more
16 efficient scheduling, leading to a more diverse and
17 robust educational program. Any minimal staff
18 reductions will occur gradually through attrition,
19 ensuring smooth transition.

20 In terms of student transportation, the
21 proposed changes will result in manageable adjustments.
22 While some students will experience slightly longer
23 travel times, approximately 15 extra minutes for those
24 from Paden City, these increases are within acceptable

1 limits. A new bus route will be developed to ensure
2 that all students are transported safely and efficiently
3 to the new consolidated school without the need for a
4 waiver. These changes aim to improve operational
5 efficiency, while maintaining student safety and
6 convenience.

7 Academically, Wetzel County Schools is
8 committed to providing high-quality education that meets
9 the needs of all students in alignment with federal,
10 state, and local regulations. By consolidating Paden
11 City High School into Magnolia High School and
12 integrating the 7th and 8th grades into New Martinsville
13 School, the district will be positioned to offer
14 enhanced educational opportunities for all students.
15 This move is in full compliance with policies such as
16 Policy 2419, Policy 2510, and Policy 2520, which align,
17 which ensures that students receive comprehensive
18 standards-based education. The consolidation also
19 aligns with Policy 6200 and 6204 which are designed to
20 improve the educational efficiency and equity.

21 Finally, it is important to recognize the
22 impact on the community served by these schools. Paden
23 City High School and Magnolia High School are central to
24 their respective communities, providing more than just

1 educational services. They are also hubs for social
2 activities and community events. The closure of Paden
3 City High School could affect these vital community
4 connections, making it more difficult to attract
5 families to the area.

6 However, the consolidation of Paden City High
7 School into Magnolia High School offers an opportunity
8 to build new community relationships and strengthen
9 support for the county's educational system. By
10 consolidating resources and expanding the scope of
11 programs available, Wetzel County can cultivate new
12 partnerships that will benefit both students and the
13 broader community.

14 In conclusion, the proposed consolidation of
15 Paden City and Magnolia High School represent a
16 strategic and necessary step for Wetzel County Schools.
17 It is an opportunity to address declining enrollment,
18 improve facilities, optimize financial resources, and
19 maintain high-quality educational opportunity for all
20 students. This consolidation will better position
21 Wetzel County for the future, ensuring the
22 sustainability of our schools and the continued success
23 for our students.

24 Thank you.

1 MS. FONNER: We will have our public
2 comment and delegations now. Please remember that -- to
3 speak into the microphone, but you're speaking to the
4 board, not to the audience. Our first speaker, you will
5 have five minutes at the end of your time. Then if
6 there are any questions that you say during it, they
7 will note them down so that they can answer it after
8 you've finished your time.

9 All right.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will there be a
11 rebuttal?

12 MS. FONNER: Our first speaker is Anissa
13 Anderson.

14 ANISSA ANDERSON: Good evening, and thank
15 you for having the opportunity to speak with you. I'm a
16 resident and a business owner here in New Martinsville.
17 I'm also the parent of a student at Magnolia High
18 School. I am, however, not a graduate of Magnolia High
19 School. I wasn't really planning on speaking tonight.
20 I was hoping to be at the state volleyball tournament,
21 but things changed.

22 So I am in support of the reconfiguration of
23 Wetzel County Schools. The operational structure of
24 Wetzel County Schools as it is now, the small rural

1 community schools, is actually robbing the students of
2 multiple opportunities: Interpersonal, academic, and
3 extracurricular. Our children have a limited number and
4 scope of elective classes, while teachers are spread
5 thin with multiple class preps. Our children and their
6 teachers deserve better.

7 We've had schools in the same areas for the
8 past 60 to 70 years, longer than many, but not most or
9 all of us have been alive. Wetzel County Schools has
10 divided its students and residents among four attendance
11 zones for too long. We aren't getting bigger. Our
12 schools are getting smaller. We need to come together
13 because our children deserve better. Wetzel County
14 Schools cannot adequately sustain four separate
15 attendance areas and personnel and operations and still
16 provide equal and appropriate educational opportunities
17 for its students. In order to truly educate individuals
18 for success, Wetzel County Schools must first face the
19 reality of change because our children deserve better.
20 It's time to stop dividing the students in our county.
21 Our children's educations are suffering. We are not
22 educating them for the future. We are simply clinging
23 to the past. We're wasting educational dollars on aging
24 and outdated school buildings and subpar athletic

1 facilities. We should honor the traditions of the past,
2 yet adapt for the future. Our children deserve better.

3 It's time to make a bold and positive and
4 unifying change for the students of Hundred, Valley,
5 Magnolia, and Paden City. We need to bring together the
6 best of each school and pool our talents, resources, and
7 personnel because our children deserve better.

8 Change needs to occur. It's not a new
9 concept. We're not the first county to change, nor is
10 this the first time our county has changed. 102 years
11 ago the citizens of Littleton experienced change when
12 Wetzel County Schools closed their high school and moved
13 their students into the brand-new Hundred High School.
14 Was it popular? Yes and no. Was it easy? No. Was it
15 beneficial? Yes. It's time to progress, to improve,
16 and to change again. Will it be popular? Yes and no.
17 Will it be easy? No. Will it be beneficial?
18 Definitely.

19 The small, rural community school model may
20 have worked 60 to 70 years ago, but we cannot expect or
21 rely on it to work in the present. Burying our heads in
22 the pattern of the past will not fix the problems of the
23 present. Wetzel County Schools needs to make a
24 definitive and unifying change, change that will

1 interest and excite our current students, encourage
2 students released to neighboring counties to return, and
3 maybe even attract out-of-county students to transfer to
4 Wetzel County.

5 Together we can create a school that Wetzel
6 County students can feel proud to attend because all
7 Wetzel County students deserve better.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

10 Since she had no questions, I'll move on to
11 the second person. Melody Wells.

12 MELODY WELLS: Okay. I would like to
13 take a minute to thank our superintendent for taking on
14 the difficult job she is facing for our students and
15 staff. This should have been done long before she came
16 to Wetzel County. I'm not talking about the closure of
17 just one school. I'm speaking about securing a better
18 education in Wetzel County. Thank you, Ms. Porter, and
19 thank you, board members, for finally taking the --
20 taking the time to really listen to the urgent needs of
21 our staff and students.

22 I will not stand here in front of you today
23 with threats or hostility. I come to you today with
24 sincere -- with sincere concern and a belief for you all

1 to look closely at the facts, test scores, kids being
2 left without teachers, and staff being overwhelmed.

3 We once had a motto, "no child left behind."
4 I don't understand why we don't use that motto anymore,
5 because we have left many behind. I have heard many
6 reasons why merging and consolidation is criticized by
7 some. Parents, grandparents, siblings have all
8 graduated from our schools, school pride, school colors,
9 community decline, students may not make the sports
10 teams that they want to play, and travel times to and
11 from our schools. The one I hear the most is kids do
12 better in small classrooms. With one of our schools
13 having a graduating class size of 17 this year, how much
14 smaller do we need to become before this holds true,
15 before that school, as well as the other three, reach
16 the rankings of top ten in the state? This argument is
17 just not realistic. Children are sitting in gymnasiums
18 and libraries for lack of teachers. This is tragic and
19 should be alarming to everyone here.

20 Travel times. I wonder if people complaining
21 have ever taken a drive to places students at this very
22 moment are actually traveling for over an hour each way
23 to school. Silver Hill, Proctor, Wileyville hill, areas
24 to which these kids are traveling to New Martinsville

1 School and Magnolia. This argument is just not valid.
2 Kids are already doing this.

3 The decline of community. It is not the
4 responsibility of this board to keep a community afloat.
5 The board, however, is responsible -- hold on -- for the
6 education or lack of education provided to each and
7 every student in this county. Pride runs deep in all
8 four schools. Alma maters are held onto, and school
9 names and colors are proudly worn. Sports teams and
10 bands are most definitely saw as the heartbeat and soul
11 of each one.

12 More importantly than all of those are the
13 future goals to each one of these students. Tell me how
14 many students have Wetzel County School athletics
15 produced to go on and make three-figure salaries? Now
16 tell me how many students in Wetzel County need an
17 education to seek a job to earn a livable wage to
18 survive their future.

19 Education is the goal. It is our goal as
20 parents, grandparents, teachers, board members, state
21 representatives, to provide the best education for our
22 children. Please do not take any recommendation from
23 people who have nothing in this fight. We have people
24 who no longer live in Wetzel County, they no longer have

1 children in our school systems, and people who have
2 taken their children out of Wetzel County Schools prior
3 and enrolled them into schools, telling us what is right
4 for our children. Why would they pull their children if
5 Wetzel County is fine for everyone else? I hear
6 arguments that people will pull their children if Wetzel
7 County merges and takes them to Tyler, Marion,
8 St. Marys, John Marshall, only to be merging into those
9 schools and never having part of their old school
10 brought into the new.

11 While merging may not be favorable, kids can
12 start friendships, build bonds, and have opportunities
13 to give input into their new school being built. They
14 can walk hand in hand into our future of Wetzel County
15 Schools.

16 I am asking that you all move forward, let us
17 know what's going on, purchase the property, break
18 ground, and bring Wetzel County students a brighter
19 future.

20 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

21 Again, no questions, so Stacey Yoho.

22 STACEY YOHO: So I come to you today with
23 quite a few questions, especially after hearing your
24 opening statements. These questions center around the

1 state's standards for effective schools as well as the
2 employment of many of the staff here.

3 First of all, what led us to today was nothing
4 that your opening statement said. You said attendance,
5 underutilized facilities, upgrades to athletic
6 facilities, stronger future educational needs, savings,
7 and then you stated, just like in the impact statement,
8 that staff will remain unchanged. The impact statement
9 states that staff will remain unchanged for the first
10 year; there will be no job loss. And then you referred
11 to that word that you've used multiple times,
12 "attrition." The biggest problem that I have right now
13 is that the state, I'm sure you know, the first -- the
14 first standard is the clear and focused mission;
15 correct? None of this has been a clear and focused
16 mission. Because when you were at the work session, the
17 problem was a staffing shortage. So I would like to ask
18 these questions: How many uncertified staff do you
19 currently have here at Magnolia High School that is
20 causing you to not meet the needs of these students?
21 You, in June of 2024, referred to us having an overage
22 of staff, an abundance of staff, we are over in the
23 formula. That's gone back and forth for the past year.
24 Again, that word "attrition" comes into play where we

1 cut jobs, maybe Paden City doesn't get their we don't
2 post positions such as the chemistry position that
3 needed to be posted at Paden City High School, we're
4 just not going to post that. Is that part of attrition?
5 So my question is how many -- how many uncertified staff
6 you have, and explain a little bit more about the
7 limited opportunities that we currently don't have.
8 Because there's beautiful headway happening at the CTE
9 Center, or at the -- at the Tech Center. And for every
10 conference that I've attended, that's the future;
11 correct? We're CTE driven. That's the future. We're
12 expanding there. So I'm very curious as to know what --
13 what we are lacking thus far.

14 Also, after the first year, for the high
15 school level, please explain to us what the RIFs and
16 transfer process will look like. What will that look
17 like for the staff that currently will come from other
18 schools into the consolidated merged school, whatever
19 we're going to call it? What will that look like? Will
20 we be adjusting schedules, condensing the -- condensing
21 the classrooms, making sure that we have the 25 or
22 however many are in the classroom? And then, say, if we
23 have seven math teachers, you know, we all know that the
24 RIF and transfer process goes by seniority, what are

1 your plans for that?

2 MS. FONNER: Are you done with your
3 speech?

4 STACEY YOHO: It's not a speech. It's
5 questions, legitimate questions.

6 MS. FONNER: You're done with your time,
7 then. You have five minutes and then they will answer
8 their comments.

9 STACEY YOHO: I think that's all for
10 today.

11 MR. MCPHERSON: Okay. I'll try to answer
12 your questions, and if I don't, you can let me know that
13 I've missed one.

14 We are short a couple folks here at Magnolia.
15 Countywide, we're about 15. There's 12 or 14 jobs
16 posted right now.

17 STACEY YOHO: Is that just secondary?
18 Because I'm just talking about secondary.

19 MR. MCPHERSON: That's everywhere.

20 STACEY YOHO: Secondary.

21 MR. MCPHERSON: Magnolia, I think I have
22 one or two right now.

23 STACEY YOHO: One or two?

24 MR. MCPHERSON: One or two. Over the

1 formula is because the formula does not take into
2 account how many buildings you have or how many
3 buildings you have to staff. So if we had 20 schools,
4 the formula would give us the same number of teachers
5 we're supposed to have. So that's how we're
6 simultaneously overstaffed, at least from position
7 standpoint, and understaffed because we can't find
8 people.

9 Attrition is similar to what you described,
10 and that is if somebody leaves us, we look at whether or
11 not that position needs filled. It's not getting rid of
12 somebody. It's if somebody were to -- to resign or
13 leave us, that we would just decide whether that
14 position needs filled or not. But we've -- I think it's
15 been made pretty clear, both in speaking and writing,
16 that our intention is to keep everyone around through
17 this process.

18 STACEY YOHO: Am I allowed to respond
19 back to the question?

20 MR. MCPHERSON: I mean, if you have a
21 follow-up, I think that's okay, but we're not going to
22 get into a giant back-and-forth, I don't think.

23 STACEY YOHO: I'll save it.

24 MR. MCPHERSON: As far as how RIF and

1 transfer works for this, we've done some checking, and
2 we -- assuming this goes through here in a week and a
3 half, we will look immediately at posting positions at
4 the new consolidated school prior to RIF and transfer
5 season so we can settle everybody out where they need to
6 be before that happens so people have lots of time to
7 figure out where they could be.

8 STACEY YOHO: So RIF and transfer will
9 happen this year or next year?

10 MR. MCPHERSON: It could. I don't think
11 that anybody in their right mind would touch RIF and
12 transfer in the secondary environment if this changes.

13 STACEY YOHO: But in the impact
14 statement, it states that it will happen the second year
15 after this happens; correct?

16 MR. MCPHERSON: Well, RIF and transfer
17 season happens every year, yes.

18 STACEY YOHO: It happens every year,
19 but the --

20 MR. MCPHERSON: We will do our --

21 STACEY YOHO: -- impact statement says --

22 MR. MCPHERSON: -- normal adjusting with
23 elementary for this year. We'll have to -- we always
24 have to adjust elementary because you always have a

1 bigger class that moves through.

2 STACEY YOHO: Right.

3 MR. MCPHERSON: And we have to do it.

4 STACEY YOHO: I'm just talking secondary
5 because that's where this really impacts --

6 MR. MCPHERSON: Right. And it does.

7 STACEY YOHO: -- the jobs.

8 MR. MCPHERSON: Right. So it would just
9 be -- our intention is that -- we do have -- there's a
10 processing code -- you've probably done some research --
11 where if you consolidate and close a school, whether
12 you -- the whole county votes on this, to give priority
13 to staff from the closed school at the schools that
14 are -- that they're consolidating into.

15 STACEY YOHO: For one year.

16 MR. MCPHERSON: That's in code. Okay? I
17 can't control that. That's in code. So that would have
18 to happen, and we would make that happen as fast as
19 possible so we can get those jobs posted. And I think
20 that some of that is a carryover from yesteryear when
21 there was, you know, 20 people applying for every job
22 where it would -- you know, you would want to give
23 priority. You know, we don't have 20 people applying
24 for every job right now.

1 MS. PORTER: As far as curriculum and
2 instruction go and staffing, a brief example here, if we
3 have a small school of one math teacher and we combine
4 that school with another school and we have two math
5 teachers at the other school, then we would have a total
6 of three, and then the math teachers would not be spread
7 so thin, so they would not have to teach every single
8 course for every single grade level. Instead, they
9 could focus on maybe their strengths, like Algebra 2,
10 Geometry, maybe they could pick up an elective that we
11 don't currently offer. So when we're looking at that,
12 we're wanting to lessen the burden on our teachers and
13 also provide the coursework that our students would like
14 to have, necessary to have, and also is a good focus on
15 that. So our mission has never changed. We want to
16 provide the best educational opportunities we can for
17 all of our students in Wetzel County. Thank you.

18 MS. FONNER: Did you have any other
19 questions listed there?

20 MS. PORTER: Huh-uh.

21 MS. FONNER: Was there anything else you
22 said already that they didn't answer?

23 STACEY YOHO: Not that I said already. I
24 will talk tomorrow.

1 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Next person to
2 speak is Mike Turner.

3 MIKE TURNER: Good evening, and thank you
4 for allowing me to talk. My first question for this
5 evening is in the environmental impact of -- under
6 Community 3.2, where did you find the information that
7 was put in the report? I'd like to quote some from
8 that. We see that a great impact will be made in both
9 schools, that we have a strong relationship and we see
10 that in the communities. Each school serves as a focal
11 point of the community. Each school supports community
12 connectedness and a sense of belonging. This is
13 important. This -- this is what makes community
14 schools. And you did a good job on that.

15 In the existing relationship between Paden
16 City High School and Magnolia High School and the New
17 Martinsville School and their communities, they would be
18 affected by the closure in that connection between the
19 students and the community and could possibly be lost.
20 You could lose that part of our community. Not only
21 Paden City, because as time goes by, you're looking at a
22 larger consolidated school, and there will be no
23 community schools. Think of that. Lose all of our
24 community schools. We're in a time of decreasing

1 population. And what do we want to do? We want to go
2 out and spend up to a hundred million dollars to build a
3 new school. And I think that figure has been quoted
4 before. A hundred million dollars in a community that's
5 losing people. In this report, we're told that families
6 like to live near the schools. But this school will be
7 built central to Wetzel County. It'll be in the
8 country. That's strange. Shut down all your community
9 schools and take and put a school in the country where
10 there's very little population, out on a road that is
11 not very safe, and have a school there where the kids
12 don't get involved with community. What does that do
13 for citizenship? How do we grow there?

14 I found that Cornell University has done a
15 study on consolidation and merging of schools. One of
16 their findings is rural schools must explore how they
17 can gain effectiveness in their present configuration.
18 I've been to many board meetings, and I know you're
19 talking about some of that, but there's no action. No
20 action. How is that a good consideration on shutting
21 down these community schools? Let's think about
22 consolidation in West Virginia. Before consolidation,
23 West Virginia was rated with other states in the nation.
24 And it was rated between 46 and 50. Now after more than

1 50 years of consolidation, you look at the rankings of
2 West Virginia schools, and we're between 46 and 50. No
3 change. Yes, the extracurricular thing is greater.
4 Well, this year and last year they made a AAAA group,
5 but the education didn't get better. It didn't help.
6 What's going to happen to our taxation when the well
7 runs dry?

8 MS. FONNER: Would you like to address
9 this question that he had?

10 MS. PORTER: So in our -- as
11 Mr. McPherson is looking up this exact 3.2 that you
12 said, I just want to point out our community is Wetzel
13 County, and I -- and this is hard, and these are small
14 schools that are impacted, but we need to stick together
15 as a Wetzel County community.

16 MR. MCPHERSON: I think to answer your
17 question, I think that this is something we all agree,
18 on and that is that information comes from, you know,
19 the common sense of belonging to the community, whatever
20 that community is, is an important part of a school.
21 And you pose an interesting question for us, and that is
22 what do we do when the well runs dry.

23 MIKE TURNER: And that's what Cornell
24 found out. The well is running dry in the state of New

1 York, and they have the highest tax rate in any state
2 for their property.

3 MS. FONNER: Is there any other question
4 that you asked that was not answered?

5 MIKE TURNER: Can we really afford to
6 shut these schools down because we're getting this
7 excess tax? We put away \$30 million in the bank this
8 year.

9 MS. FONNER: Mr. Turner, I asked you if
10 there are any questions you had already asked.

11 MIKE TURNER: Yes. How long will we go
12 spending money that we don't have in the future?

13 MS. FONNER: That question was not in
14 your initial presentation.

15 MIKE TURNER: I talked about the taxes.
16 I talked about the --

17 MR. LANCASTER: I don't mind answering
18 that a little bit. You know, in 2010, I believe, we
19 were in a different situation, and the well had run dry
20 in this county. We could not afford the schools that we
21 had in 2010. Oil and gas came along and changed things.
22 To answer your question, without oil and gas, we
23 wouldn't be here. We would have already consolidated.
24 There is no doubt about that. Because we can't afford

1 having that many positions over the funding formula.
2 12 1/2 million dollars over the funding formula a year
3 is what we're paying right now in our current
4 configuration. So that's money that you don't spend
5 down the road through attrition, through retirements.
6 That's money that you don't spend in salaries. And, you
7 know, this board has -- has said that they're trying to
8 keep every teacher on board, and I believe that. But
9 without the oil and gas money when the well runs dry,
10 which, hopefully, it doesn't in my time here, when the
11 well runs dry, we won't have a choice. The only reason
12 we can do what we're doing right now and be the number
13 one county over the funding formula in the state of West
14 Virginia, and it's not even close, the only way we can
15 do that, the way we've done that the past several years,
16 is oil and gas revenue that comes to our county. When
17 that goes away, we don't have a choice.

18 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

19 Okay. The next speaker, Rodney McWilliams.

20 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: I do have a couple
21 questions that I had formulated before the meeting, but
22 in hearing the presentation, a couple new ones came up.
23 First of all, again, I'd like to state what's been
24 stated here, the reason for this consolidation seems to

1 change on a weekly basis. And in regards to that, there
2 was a statement made by Superintendent Porter that the
3 savings is going to be around \$358,000, and I think the
4 term was "significant." I don't believe that's a
5 significant number. And you can defer the question to
6 your treasurer, what is the total county budget for
7 education in Wetzel County, and what is 358,000 that's a
8 percentage of that. I guarantee it's pretty small, but
9 you can answer that later.

10 I also have a question, we keep going back to
11 the funding formula. Well, it's been widely known that
12 we are off the funding formula because we have local tax
13 base that takes us off the funding formula, so I'm not
14 sure why you keep referring to the funding formula when
15 it doesn't apply.

16 Now, again, when -- if oil and gas goes away,
17 then the funding formula is our basis for our funding.
18 I understand that. But I don't understand why we're
19 using the funding formula as a crutch when it doesn't
20 apply because we have our own funds to satisfy all the
21 needs. Those are subsequent questions that came up this
22 evening.

23 What I had intended to ask about, and still
24 will, is down the road, pending approval of this plan by

1 the Wetzel County Board of Education and pending
2 subsequent approval by the West Virginia State Board of
3 Education, the rebranding of this new school that is
4 going to sit on Maple Avenue is paramount to the success
5 of the new school. Has there been a mission statement
6 drafted for the new school? And if so, how is that
7 different from the previous mission statements of both
8 Paden City High School and Magnolia High School?

9 I think in regards to logistics of the new
10 school, I'm hearing that there has already been a
11 committee formed of Magnolia students that are already
12 discussing and making recommendations for school names,
13 colors, mascots, et cetera. I'd like to know if that's
14 true.

15 And, lastly, what is the overall timeline for
16 the rebranding of the new school, knowing that it needs
17 to be complete, including new uniforms -- the whole
18 rebranding of the new school will need to be complete by
19 late summer of 2025, so is there a timeline that will
20 ensure that if this plan is approved and put into
21 action, that the new school on Maple Avenue will be
22 rebranded in time for the new school year?

23 MS. FONNER: Okay. Go ahead. Whichever
24 question you want to start with.

1 MS. PORTER: Well, I think Mr. Lancaster
2 will tell us about the total county budget. But I want
3 to reiterate that I know that we talk about being over
4 the formula, and we do so because of our financial
5 responsibility. So part of running a successful school
6 system or any business does take a financial
7 responsibility. So, yes, we are over the formula. Yes,
8 we do get reminded of that quite frequently, but we are
9 well over the formula. Not even close. Like upwards of
10 almost 200 people. So that 12.5 million in salaries, we
11 do that because of our location and how our schools are
12 spread out.

13 As far as the rebranding, that is actually
14 something that will be discussed when the time comes
15 because that is not specifically part of this impact
16 statement. As I've said before, rebranding occurs when
17 we bring that to this board of education and then they
18 would vote on that. Rebranding is as simple as the
19 board voting on us doing that and making that change and
20 making the school color change. I have met --

21 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: That's why I asked
22 what's the timeline? What's the perceived timeline of
23 that?

24 MS. PORTER: Well, if that is something

1 that we are going forward to do, then we will make sure
2 that is done by the next school year. We have to.

3 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: That's why I used the
4 word "given."

5 MS. PORTER: Well, we have to vote on it
6 the 22nd.

7 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Given that this plan
8 is approved --

9 MS. PORTER: Yeah, given this plan is
10 approved.

11 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: -- is it not a given
12 that the rebranding will take place --

13 MS. PORTER: But I just want to be very
14 clear that the rebranding is not part of the impact
15 statement. So -- and I also want to circle back because
16 I did speak with groups of students at each of the
17 affected high schools, and we did talk. They had
18 questions. I was very open and honest with them. But
19 there is no set committee as of today on what colors
20 we're picking or what mascot we're picking. I,
21 actually, spoke to another school this afternoon and
22 some of the same questions come up, and they are
23 concerned about that. But right now we are focused on
24 step one of this procedure which is getting the

1 consolidation and closure completed. But mind you, we
2 will waste no time going forward after that date.

3 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: With rebranding.

4 MS. PORTER: With rebranding and bringing
5 whatever --

6 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: And other -- the
7 other steps.

8 MS. PORTER: Yeah, and bringing that to
9 the board. Remember, the board has to have that vote.

10 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Correct. I just
11 didn't know if it was already in --

12 MS. PORTER: No.

13 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: -- the perceived time
14 line, as we know, will be very tight.

15 MS. PORTER: THE students have given me
16 ideas, have asked about colors, have sent me fun
17 pictures of different joint mascots, some very silly,
18 some amazingly talented, some just very lighthearted,
19 but there's nothing set in that at this point.

20 MR. LANCASTER: To answer your question,
21 and I know where you're going with that, no, \$358,000
22 722 -- \$358,722 as a percentage of our total budget,
23 which, quite honestly, is approaching \$150 million right
24 now, is not a high percentage. You know that. I know

1 that.

2 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Would you call it
3 significant?

4 MR. LANCASTER: I wouldn't call it
5 significant, but I would also say that \$358,000 goes a
6 long ways. It does. So, yeah, but I also tell you this
7 as you laugh at me.

8 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: I'm not laughing at
9 you. I'm laughing at --

10 MR. LANCASTER: The answer is -- the
11 answer is, we've said it over, over, and over again,
12 financial is a part of this. You have to look at this
13 as a financial -- the financial impact down the road.
14 That's not the main reason for this. It hasn't been.
15 I've said that over and over again. Things have changed
16 since we were here before. No, \$358,000. In an
17 industry where we're in the service industry, where our
18 largest part of that \$150 million is salaries -- by the
19 way that 150 is actually 146 million. 29 million of
20 that is money that we've already set aside to go
21 towards, hopefully, construction of a new school. And
22 that's a start of that. We did that last budget. And
23 the idea is not further increase the burden of the
24 taxpayers in Wetzel County, to start setting aside some

1 of this oil and gas revenue that's coming into our
2 county so that we can do this without a bond. That's
3 our goal. So, yes, we have a high -- much higher budget
4 than the savings you'll see from closing Paden City High
5 School, but that percentage, you know, there's no way to
6 answer that other than that. It is not a large amount
7 in comparison to --

8 RODNEY MCWILLIAMS: Thank you. My point
9 was it was addressed as a significant savings as a
10 reason for the closure. I don't think the facts bear
11 that statement out is my point. It wasn't to in any way
12 think that the mathematics were done incorrectly, but I
13 don't think it is a strong basis point for what this
14 plan would realize.

15 MS. FONNER: Were there any other
16 questions? Thank you. Our next speaker is Joel Potts.

17 JOEL POTTS: Thank you for the
18 opportunity to address the board and the administration.
19 This is very difficult for everybody. I am
20 third-generation Magnolia High School. The first three
21 buildings is where we graduated in. I had an uncle that
22 graduated from the building that became Central, a
23 grandmother who graduated from the building that sat on
24 south Main Street across from the Eakin Furniture

1 Company where we have the museum today. So we have a
2 long history. My father graduated in '35 from 601 Maple
3 Avenue, and I graduated in '76 from 601 Maple Avenue.
4 But as much as I bleed gold and blue, what's best for
5 the students of the county -- and probably yesterday I
6 wouldn't have said this, but my talk has changed from
7 just listening to some other speakers, and I'm probably
8 not going to be very popular, but the severe decrease in
9 population and what you all can have in offering classes
10 and the level of classes that can be offered in person,
11 not virtual learning, I think the time has come that we
12 do what has to be done and support it.

13 I realize that the Harvard study, my boss
14 presented that study ten years ago with the hearings,
15 that one of the top -- the top three things that a town
16 has to have to survive is the school, the church, and a
17 grocery store. Well, basically -- and I work -- most of
18 you know where I work and have for many, many, many
19 years. One of our businesses that I work for is right
20 up the street from Paden City High School, Jarvis
21 Funeral Home, and that is a concern, will people move to
22 a community that doesn't have the school. Harvard said
23 they wouldn't. But I think times have changed.
24 Transportation is probably a lot better than it was when

1 people walked everywhere. And I'm not sure how old that
2 study was anyhow at the time, but I've changed. We all
3 have our memories. And if it is the best thing for a
4 higher level of secondary education, I will support it.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. FONNER: Thank you. Our next person
7 is Amy Witschey.

8 AMY WITSCHEY: Hello. The 3.2 section of
9 the impact study was my favorite part of the study. On
10 page 27, it talks about expanded academic opportunities.
11 "With more resources pooled together, the consolidated
12 school would offer a wider variety of advanced courses,
13 including advanced placement classes, honors programs,
14 and specialized electives. This would better prepare
15 students for college and careers, giving them more
16 choices and pathways to success." Yes. This is exactly
17 what we need. And I've had -- of course, you know, we
18 all have discussions about this in the community, and
19 people have said, Well, it's -- you know, maybe it's not
20 going to save that much money. And it's not, but it's
21 going to stop the bleeding. We need to do this to stop
22 the bleeding. We should have done it years ago because
23 we need more courses, our teachers -- everything you
24 have said tonight, I agree. We need our teachers to

1 have more time to plan so they can specialize in a
2 certain thing. We need those teachers, and we need them
3 together to help with the teacher shortage.

4 Just today, actually, I had a conference with
5 one of my son's teachers. I have a son who is an 8th
6 grader at New Martinsville School, a daughter who is a
7 senior at Magnolia. I had a conference with one of his
8 teachers, and she told me something I didn't know. She
9 said that she encourages her students to do well on
10 their i-Readys in 8th grade because if they do a certain
11 level -- and I'm not going to pretend to know it all,
12 but they need to do well -- because that could be the
13 difference in them able to take two electives their
14 freshman year in high school rather than one elective in
15 their freshman year of high school. That's a good
16 incentive. You know what's an even better incentive?
17 If there are electives he wants to take. And so if
18 there can be more electives available, that would be
19 great. Our Tech Center is doing some good things. My
20 son -- what do they offer? My son is interested in
21 heavy equipment operation. We do not have that, so let
22 me just put a plug in for that. So there's someone
23 coming up to Magnolia High School, or whatever this high
24 school may be, he's coming up to his freshman year, and

1 so he's interested in that.

2 Also, I -- in the Number 5, it says "This new
3 school identity" -- on that same page -- "would inspire
4 a sense of pride, fostering a culture of school spirit
5 and tradition that blends the best of both former
6 schools." I heard someone say recently, "Isn't it great
7 that all of our schools have different strengths?" No,
8 it's not. Wouldn't it be great if all those strengths
9 were together in one place, and so that if a student
10 had -- I'm going to use some examples. We know Paden
11 City has a great band. We know Magnolia has FFA, and
12 Paden City doesn't. What if -- I think I have that
13 right, and you can correct me if I'm wrong. What if a
14 student at Magnolia could be a great musician if they
15 only had what was available at Paden City High School?
16 What if a student at Paden City High School could be a
17 great future farmer if only they had that available at
18 their high school? If we were all together, they could
19 all have that opportunity.

20 One other thing, this weekend my kids and I
21 went to -- actually, just a craft show. It wasn't even
22 that big of a deal. But we went to a craft show in the
23 Pittsburgh area. And we went into this beautiful, large
24 school that, obviously, had lots of opportunities, and

1 my kids were wide eyed and, like, wow. Look at what
2 this school has. Look at this classroom. The one
3 theater room we went into, we could tell it was a
4 classroom, but it was also a theater. And we're like,
5 wow, that's incredible. Just the imagination of what
6 could be possible if we look outside of our own little
7 area.

8 The other thing I wanted to mention, sometimes
9 people say to me, "But consolidated schools are so big."
10 Not here. Our population is so small. The total new
11 enrollment, if Paden City or Magnolia are here, is 382
12 students. I graduated from Magnolia High School. It
13 was larger than that when I graduated from here.
14 Significantly. Probably -- that's maybe 75 percent of
15 the school when I graduated from here. We're not
16 talking a large school, so people who think that might
17 think differently.

18 One last thing, a while back I wanted my
19 daughter to change schools. I asked her, "Please. Just
20 go somewhere else." Things have gotten better since
21 then. She did not want to change. She liked her
22 friends. She liked her school. She was comfortable
23 there. And someone literally said to my daughter,
24 "You're not going anywhere. You have strong Magnolia

1 blood." That made me more angry than anything. I don't
2 care where my kids graduate from high school. I want
3 them to have a good education in a safe environment.
4 And I hope that you proceed with this. Thank you for
5 doing it. Thank you.

6 MS. FONNER: I have one more name on the
7 list, but it's scratched out, so I believe that was our
8 last speaker.

9 All right. At this time I ask for a motion --
10 I motion that we adjourn this meeting. Do I have a
11 second?

12 MS. MITCHELL: Second.

13 MS. FONNER: Moved by Mrs. Fonner.
14 Seconded by Mrs. Mitchell.

15 All those in favor, say aye.

16 (Chorus of ayes.)

17 MS. FONNER: Motion carries unanimously.
18 We are adjourned at 6:56.

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20 (The hearing was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.)

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THE STATE OF :
WEST VIRGINIA :
 : SS: C E R T I F I C A T E
COUNTY OF WETZEL :

I, DIANA BAKER, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the proceedings within were by me reduced to stenotype; afterwards reduced to Computer-Aided Transcription under my direction and control; that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings within.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office in New Martinsville, West Virginia, on the 21st day of November, 2024.



Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia

My Commission expires:
May 24, 2026

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Welcome!



NMS PUBLIC HEARING

DATE : NOVEMBER 14, 2024

Print Clearly Please

NO	NAME
✓ 1	Steve PALHISCO
✓ 2	DANIEL W. BOSTEY
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In The Matter Of:

*Closure of Paden City High School And Its
Consolidation Into Magnolia High School, et al.*

*Public Hearing New Martinsville School
November 14, 2024*

*WV Depos
2413 East Pike Street, Suite 119
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26301*

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WETZEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC HEARING

RE: CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL
AND ITS CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL
AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL

The following proceedings were stenographically recorded by and before Diana Baker, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of West Virginia, at New Martinsville School, 20 East Benjamin Drive, New Martinsville, West Virginia, on Thursday, November 14, 2024, beginning at 6:01 p.m.

APPEARANCES

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- Cassandra Porter, Superintendent
- Ben McPherson, Chief Personnel Officer
- Jeff Lancaster, Treasurer
- JoBeth Simmons, Executive Secretary

- Wetzel County Board of Education Members
- Linda Fonner, President
- Brian Castilow, Vice President
- Jimmy Glasscock, Member
- Christine Nice, Member
- Christine Mitchell, Member

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MS. FONNER: I call this special meeting
3 of the Wetzel County Board of Education to order. We
4 will begin with the flag pledge led by Mr. Glasscock,
5 followed by a moment of silence.

6 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

7 (Moment of silence observed.)

8 MS. FONNER: You may be seated.

9 For the record, all five board members are
10 here tonight: Mr. Glasscock, Mr. Castilow, Mrs. Fonner,
11 Mrs. Nice, and Mrs. Mitchell.

12 We'll have the hearing on the closure of Paden
13 City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia
14 High School and New Martinsville School. We'll start
15 with the summary of proposed action presented by the
16 administration.

17 MS. PORTER: Good evening and thank you
18 for attending this evening. I am Cassie Porter,
19 superintendent of schools. This is my opening statement
20 for tonight's meeting.

21 Wetzel County Schools is at a crossroads,
22 facing significant demographic challenges that require
23 thoughtful consideration and strategic action. The
24 population of Wetzel County has declined by 16.6 percent

1 from 2010 and 16,537 to an estimated 13,786 in 2024,
2 outpacing both the national growth rate of 7.7 percent
3 and the 4.3 percent decline seen in West Virginia.
4 Correspondingly, student enrollment in Wetzel County has
5 dropped by approximately 800 students over the same
6 period, placing pressure on our schools and their
7 ability to provide a robust educational experience to
8 all students.

9 Magnolia High School and Paden City High
10 School, both located in riverfront communities in Wetzel
11 County, together account for about two-thirds of the
12 county's total enrollment. Over the last decade, both
13 schools have experienced decline in enrollment.
14 Magnolia High School, which served 420 students in 2014,
15 has seen that number drop to 303 students in the '23-'24
16 school year. Similarly, Paden City High School, which
17 had 127 students in grades 9 through 12 ten years ago,
18 is now just down to 107. This ongoing enrollment
19 decline reflected in the '24-'25 school year figures,
20 286 students at Magnolia and 96 at Paden City, has led
21 to the propose to consolidate these schools and
22 integrate the 7th and 8th grades into New Martinsville
23 School.

24 This consolidation is a proactive response to

1 diminishing student population and underutilized
2 facilities. New Martinsville School, while also
3 experiencing fluctuations in enrollment, has significant
4 unused capacity and will absorb the additional students
5 from Paden City without surpassing its capacity of 1309
6 students.

7 When it comes to the physical infrastructure
8 of our schools, the need to upgrade is clear. Magnolia
9 High School, with its size and better facilities,
10 requires approximately 16 million in improvements,
11 including HVAC upgrades and enhancements to athletic
12 facilities. In contrast, Paden City High School, with
13 its more limited site, would require 7.5 million in
14 renovations to meet even the basic standards. However,
15 the small size of Paden City campus and its limited room
16 for expansion make it unsustainable for long-term
17 options. Magnolia's larger, more versatile campus, with
18 necessary improvements, provides a stronger foundation
19 for meeting future educational needs.

20 From a financial standpoint, the proposed
21 consolidation offers savings. Wetzel County Schools
22 anticipates an annual savings of 358,722, primarily from
23 reduced utility and maintenance costs at the closed
24 Paden City High School. While staffing levels will

1 remain unchanged across both professional and service
2 personnel, operational costs will be optimized from the
3 consolidation, ensuring more efficient use of resources.
4 This restructuring will allow the county to better
5 allocate funds, ensuring the continued sustainability of
6 Magnolia High School and addressing financial
7 inefficiencies tied to underenrolled schools.

8 A key benefit to this consolidation is that it
9 will not result in job losses. Teachers particularly
10 will benefit from reduced class preparation burdens,
11 allowing them to focus on fewer courses and offer a
12 broader array of electives. This also allows for more
13 efficient scheduling, leading to a more diverse and
14 robust educational program. Any minimal staff
15 reductions will occur gradually through attrition,
16 ensuring smooth transition.

17 In terms of student transportation, the
18 proposed changes will result in manageable adjustments.
19 While some students will experience slightly longer
20 travel times, approximately 15 extra minutes for those
21 from Paden City, these increases are within the
22 acceptable limits. A new bus route will be developed to
23 ensure that all students are transported safely and
24 efficiently to the new consolidated schools without the

1 need for waivers. These changes aim to improve
2 operational efficiency while maintaining student safety
3 and convenience.

4 Academically, Wetzel County is committed to
5 providing a high-quality education that meets the needs
6 of all students in alignment with federal, state, and
7 local regulations. By consolidating Paden City High
8 School into Magnolia High School and integrating the 7th
9 and 8th grades into New Martinsville School, the
10 district will be positioned to offer enhanced
11 educational opportunities for all students. This move
12 is in full compliance with policies such as 2419, 2510,
13 and 2520, which ensure that students receive a
14 comprehensive, standards-based education. The
15 consolidation also aligns with Policy 6200 and 6204,
16 which are designed to improve educational efficiency and
17 equity.

18 Finally, it is important to recognize the
19 impact on the community served by these schools. Paden
20 City High School and Magnolia High School are central to
21 their respective communities, providing more than just
22 educational services. They are also hubs for social
23 activities and community events. The closure of Paden
24 City High School could affect these vital community

1 connections, making it more difficult to attract
2 families to the area. However, the consolidation of
3 Paden City High School into Magnolia High School offers
4 an opportunity to build new community relationships,
5 strengthen the support for the county's educational
6 system. By consolidating resources and expanding the
7 scope of programs available, Wetzel County can cultivate
8 new partnerships that will benefit both students and the
9 broader community.

10 In conclusion, the proposed consolidation of
11 Paden City and Magnolia High Schools represent a
12 strategic and necessary step for Wetzel County Schools.
13 It's an opportunity to address declining enrollment,
14 improve facilities, optimize financial resources, and
15 maintain the high-quality educational opportunities for
16 all students.

17 This consolidation will better position Wetzel
18 County for the future, ensuring the sustainability of
19 our schools and the continued success of our students.
20 Thank you.

21 MS. FONNER: Thank you, Mrs. Porter.

22 In accordance with West Virginia Policy 6204
23 and Wetzel County Policy BDDH, each speaker will be
24 allotted a maximum of five minutes to present their

1 remarks. This policy ensures that all individuals have
2 an equal opportunity to address the board in a fair and
3 timely manner. During the five-minute speaking period,
4 any questions or clarifications raised by the speaker
5 will not be addressed immediately. Instead, in
6 accordance with Policy 6204 3.4.a.8, all questions will
7 be answered at the conclusion of the speaker's allotted
8 time. This structure helps maintain order and ensures
9 that each speaker has the full opportunity to present
10 their views without interruption and that they are able
11 to use the five minutes they're entitled to. We ask
12 that all participants respect this time limitation to
13 facilitate an orderly and efficient meeting.

14 Also want to remind you that board members are
15 not allowed to respond to any of the comments today.
16 The administration and her staff will be answering the
17 questions. All comments should be made to the board and
18 not to the audience. Statements are not to be of a
19 personal nature. The board is not responsible for the
20 speaker's comments. The speakers are responsible for
21 their own comments. And the board president has the
22 authority to make order -- to maintain order at all
23 meetings.

24 So we have two speakers tonight. Our first

1 one will be Mr. Steve Pallisco.

2 STEVE PALLISCO: Good evening, everyone.
3 I think everybody knows me, but I'm going to introduce
4 myself anyway. I'm Steve Pallisco, and my wife and I,
5 Jerry, have been residents of Wetzel County for
6 47 years. We have three kids and seven grandkids.
7 Three of our kids, obviously, graduated from Magnolia
8 High School. Three of our grandkids graduated from
9 Magnolia High School, one from River. We have three in
10 the system: One a freshman, one in 7th grade, one in
11 6th grade.

12 I'm not going to bring up anything about why
13 we should do it because last night there was several
14 good -- several good speeches of why we need to do this,
15 and it was important ways, but we have so many ways of
16 why we should do it. But I want to look at Jeff first,
17 and I want to thank you for what you clarified on what I
18 was thinking last night when we talked oil and gas
19 money. Because I had heard this before, too, when folks
20 would say, "Well, they've got all this money. Why can't
21 they operate four schools?" Well, you hit it on the
22 head, and I appreciate that, because if we didn't have
23 that money, we'd already be consolidated. And if we do
24 have that money, for goodness sakes, take advantage of

1 it like other counties and cities have done and build
2 this thing for our community and for our county. I
3 mean, we need to do it right now. Right now. That's
4 why I respect each and every one of you for being a part
5 of this.

6 Another thing last night that kind of bothered
7 me is when an individual said, and I've heard it before,
8 too, not just in there, but when you shut a school down,
9 it takes a city down with it. That bothers me because
10 I've been in council for 22 years. It's not the
11 school's responsibility of a city's success or failures.
12 It's ours. It's our job as city government to figure
13 out what's best for our city to make it a better city,
14 to bring in better revenues, to bring in jobs, the fine
15 festivals that we do, you know, two Regattas, Back Home,
16 the school's not responsible for that. But what I want
17 everybody to understand is the city wants to work with
18 the school and the students, and we already have. I
19 talked to Kimball, Jason Kimball, on the Tech Center,
20 and when this thing gets all done, it's going to be a
21 fabulous thing because, you know, you're going to
22 have -- if someone wants to be an electrician or a
23 plumber, you can go and be an apprentice at our city.
24 You can go to the electric department or you can go to

1 the water department and work, and you can find out
2 then, well, I've been in the electric department. That
3 job really stinks. I'm glad I did this. Now I know not
4 to do it. You know?

5 But now I want to give two success stories
6 that we've already had. We had one individual who
7 wanted to be a police dispatcher, and he got into the
8 work-study program and we brought him into the city
9 police department and he worked as a dispatcher to learn
10 the job. And after he turned 18 and he graduated, we
11 hired him as a full-time dispatcher. It's full
12 benefits, good wage, healthcare completely paid for.
13 What a success story.

14 Devon -- Devon Tennant, another success story.
15 He was student council at Magnolia. He come down to
16 city council, wanted to be a part of our council to see
17 if he wanted to get involved in political issues. Well,
18 again, Devon got beat in this election, but Devon isn't
19 going to get beat in many of them because I'm going to
20 tell you what, for a 19-year-old, this kid is
21 intelligent. And he's a student at Bethany, and he's
22 already ready in two years to run again.

23 So these are two success stories that I feel
24 that we can work toward. We want to work with the board

1 of education and the schools.

2 One thing that hadn't been brought up -- just
3 another minute -- one thing that hadn't been brought up
4 is athletics. I didn't hear anything about athletics.
5 By all means, you're going to have better programs
6 because you're going to have better students and better
7 athletes to work together. But I've heard people say
8 before, "Well, you know, if I go to a bigger school, my
9 kid may not play." He may not. But if he has any work
10 ethic at all, to get better, you've got to play with
11 somebody that's equal or better than you, and then
12 you've got a better shot at playing. And if that time
13 you can't play, then everybody can't be an athlete. You
14 know, go on and do something else.

15 But I am in complete -- and my wife and my
16 grandkids are in total support of this consolidation. I
17 want you all to know, I want to appreciate each board
18 member that's here, the superintendent, and anybody
19 that's involved that isn't sitting here right now that
20 took this project on, because it needs to be the future.
21 It needs to be the future for our students, for our
22 teachers, and the whole educational system of Wetzel
23 County for years to come. So thank you and good luck.

24 MS. FONNER: Thank you.

1 Our next speaker is Daniel Witschey.

2 DANIEL WITSCHEY: Superintendent, board
3 members, I came in this evening not knowing whether I
4 was going to speak or not. I'm in total support of this
5 consolidation. The time has come. We need to change.
6 I have a daughter at Magnolia. I have a son who is in
7 8th grade and will be a freshman next year at Magnolia.
8 My daughter suffered one year without a teacher for
9 Algebra 2. I'm hoping that that doesn't happen to my
10 son. He needs to have the opportunities. He needs to
11 have the teachers available to him to make sure that he
12 has that ability to succeed. It's a real shame what's
13 gone on the past few years. A lot of it has to do with
14 the teacher shortage. We all know that. But it's time
15 to change. We have to figure out a way to get these
16 buildings together and get everybody on the same page
17 where we can provide better opportunities for all these
18 students.

19 As far as money goes, I'm sure all of you have
20 seen the figures. If we keep these buildings open,
21 there's going to have to be a massive investment in the
22 infrastructure of those four high schools. They're
23 35 years old. That is Magnolia, Valley, Hundred. Paden
24 City is 1975, I believe. Those systems are going to

1 have to be upgraded. They're 20 years past due. Do you
2 really want to spend \$16 million at Magnolia, \$7 million
3 at Paden City, and you haven't touched the athletic
4 facilities? Magnolia's 12, 15 million to redo that
5 facility. If you've got 23 million invested inside
6 those old buildings and then another 15 in one athletic
7 complex, you're at \$38 million. How much is a new
8 consolidated high school for all four high schools going
9 to cost? 60 million? You're halfway there. Don't stop
10 with two schools. Keep going. Make it one central
11 school. That's what we need to happen. We need to do
12 it. It needs to happen. It should have happened ten
13 years ago. It's time. Make some changes and improve
14 things in this county.

15 MS. FONNER: Thank you. With that being
16 the end of the delegations and public comment, I move
17 that we adjourn.

18 MS. NICE: Second.

19 MS. FONNER: It's been moved by
20 Mrs. Fonner, seconded by Mrs. Nice. All those in favor
21 say aye.

22 (Chorus of ayes.)

23 MS. FONNER: Opposed?

24 We are finished. We are adjourned at 6:18.

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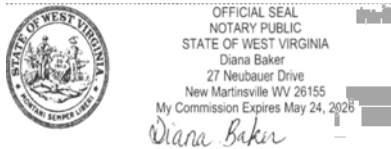
(The hearing was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.)

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THE STATE OF :
WEST VIRGINIA :
 : SS: C E R T I F I C A T E
COUNTY OF WETZEL :

I, DIANA BAKER, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the proceedings within were by me reduced to stenotype; afterwards reduced to Computer-Aided Transcription under my direction and control; that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings within.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office in New Martinsville, West Virginia, on the 21st day of November, 2024.



Notary Public within and for the State of West Virginia

My Commission expires:
May 24, 2026

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Superintendent Cassandra R. Porter,
Members of the Wetzel County Board of Education,
Members of the West Virginia Board of Education, and
Members of the Legislative Oversight Committee on Educational Accountability,

The Local School Improvement Council of Paden City High School hereby **REJECTS** and **REFUTES** the Impact Statement and Supporting Data provided by the Wetzel County Board of Education for the following reasons:

1. This consolidation was initiated in an illegal fashion under the false pretenses of student safety and environmental concerns. The proposed closure was overturned by the 2nd Circuit Court of West Virginia in August 2024. This consolidation is politically motivated by current county administration and financially influential county residents, as it is seen as a “cost-saving measure.” It is cited in the Impact Statement that the closure would save the county approximately \$358,722 per year (pg. 5). This is only a small fraction of the budget for the entire county. In comparison, Magnolia High School costs \$5.3 million to operate, and New Martinsville School costs \$12.8 million (pg. 16).
2. Those opposing the consolidation have been retaliated against in an illegal fashion. No less than 5 employees of Wetzel County Schools have been released from their responsibilities, reprimanded, or denied advancement or additional compensated opportunities as a direct result of their advocacy. This demonstrates the Wetzel County Board of Education’s intentions to silence critics and push the consolidation agenda.
3. The professional educator shortage is not a direct result of community schools being spread thin. Instead, the Local School Improvement Council finds that the employee culture is toxic and abusive, thus causing employees to leave or deterring potential employees from applying for positions. We find that a change in county-level administration may alleviate and address this specific concern.
4. There are a number of errors or concerning statements in this document. Some, but not all, include:
 - a. No staff are proposed to go to New Martinsville School with the 7th and 8th grade student population (pg. 20).
 - b. The cost incurred to New Martinsville School would increase with a merged 7th and 8th grade population, as opposed to being unchanged (pg. 18).
 - c. It does not take 58 minutes to drive 5 miles on a school bus, even with stops in place (pg. 23).
 - d. Bringing the schools together would not “foster a stronger sense of unity and shared purpose.” (pg. 27) There have been documented cases of harassment by students and adults towards others of opposing views and communities. Superintendent Porter has irreparably divided Wetzel County and is personally responsible for future cases of harassment and assault.

Therefore, the official recommendations of the Paden City High School Local School Improvement Council are to:

1. Terminate any action leading to the closure of Paden City High School at this time.
2. Terminate any action leading to the closure of Hundred High School at this time.
3. Call on the Wetzel County Board of Education to investigate and analyze employee climate and morale, thus addressing employee vacancy issues.
4. Consider allowing teachers, on a voluntary or compensatory basis, to split their duties between multiple schools when teaching in certified areas. This practice is currently in place on a limited basis at this time, but can be grown if enough educators are willing to do this.
5. Engage directly with local colleges to recruit teachers into a career with Wetzel County Schools. Teacher-in-Residency programs can allow students to complete student teaching obligations, while promoting the benefits of working with the school district.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William R. Bell', written in a cursive style.

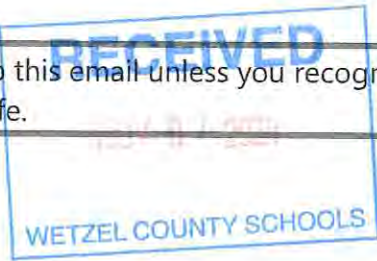
William R. Bell

Chair, Paden City High School Local School Improvement Council

<bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; Jimmy Glasscock <jimmy.d.glasscock@k12.wv.us>; Christine C. Mitchell <christine.mitchell@k12.wv.us>

Subject: Consolidation Plans

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Board Members,

Several community members have asked if I plan to speak at the hearing on November 15th. Unfortunately, I have a prior engagement and won't be able to attend. I considered speaking at another hearing but decided that it's best to let each school community have its moment. Although I've stepped away from public service, my concern for our students remains unchanged. I initially included details about the students' struggles over the past 14 months as we approach the fourth attempt to close their school, but chose not to dwell on the emotional aspects. However, I assure you that their tears, anxieties, and fears are very real.

It's been discouraging to see the divisiveness this situation has caused. People who once communicated freely now rarely speak due to differing opinions. Our communities have allowed a minority's hateful comments to divide us. I'm not sure what can heal these divides except time.

As someone who has been in your position, I ask that you examine all the information, consider the desires of your constituents, and make the decision that best serves the students, staff, and families of Wetzel County. I have a few questions based on the impact statement that I'd like to share:

- 1. Consolidation or Merger:** The impact statement uses the word consolidation and acknowledges that "The name, mascot, and colors of Magnolia High School will change with board approval." If this is rejected by the Board on a separate agenda, it would turn into a merger, significantly affecting employment situations. Is there clarity from administrators on how these scenarios relate to employment?
- 2. Teacher Shortages:** One reason cited for this move is the lack of certified teachers, a nationwide problem. The idea is to eliminate this issue by combining faculties into one building, but this depends on PCHS teachers agreeing to come. Will administrators meet with these staff members to discuss their plans before the November 22nd vote? This is an important question to resolve.
- 3. Test Scores:** They are disappointing, for sure. I believe that strong schools require engaged students, staff, and parents. If we don't elevate all three, changing locations won't improve academic achievement.
- 4. 7th and 8th Grade Students from Paden City:** This part troubles me. Moving these students to New Martinsville School instead of Paden City Elementary seems unnecessary. Yes, reconfiguring space will take work, but it can be done. The Paden City community is troubled by losing its identity, being the only one asked to transition students through three schools. This may lead to the end of Paden City Elementary, as parents might choose other schools to avoid the extra transition.

You have a lot to unpack in the coming weeks. I pray for calm and reasonableness during the process. I've worked with all but one of you to improve our students' education and respect each of you for your dedication to our community in such a challenging role. Thank you for considering the points I've shared.

Sincerely,

Brian Price

PLEASE read before you vote...

From Anissa Anderson <andersonortho@hotmail.com>

Date Thu 11/21/2024 12:36 PM

To Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; Christine Mitchell <mcmitchell@frontier.com>; christinenice@gmail.com <christinenice@gmail.com>; co1pres@frontier.com <co1pres@frontier.com>; Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

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Although I could not attend all of the public meetings, I watched each one on the YouTube live stream. Please do not mistake absence for disinterest. Some people have multiple obligations requiring their time and attention.

I was encouraged by the compassion and logic of many presenters and disturbed by the baseless assumptions and cruel accusations of others.

Some people suggested waiting. Isn't that what created this mess? Think about the next five years.

With consolidation, many — but not all-- of our fundamental challenges will be addressed. More classrooms will have certified teachers. More courses can be offered to students. Teachers will not have to give up their plan periods to cover other classrooms. Savings from closing two high schools can be immediately reinvested in the budget to fund current programs or applied to new *consolidation-related* expenses (uniforms, desks, activity buses). Extracurricular activities will have more participants and expansion of JV and freshmen teams would mean no "cuts" would be needed. Students and personnel will become more confident and hopeful as they cope with change and thrive as a result... which is the best form of education that a student can receive.

Without consolidation, the challenges will remain and possibly worsen to a point that the remedy will cost more... more money, more time, and more frustration. Students will not be receiving a quality education since they will not have certified teachers or the courses will not be offered by the schools. Students won't learn chemistry without a chemistry teacher. Students won't learn physics without a physics teacher. Students won't play football or volleyball if there are no teams. Teachers will be over-worked which will lead to more teachers leaving. Waiting is not a solution... it is a deflection.

Waiting five years to consolidate will negatively affect all of the students currently in our high schools. Waiting would compromise the quality of education for the 837 students currently enrolled in grades 8-12 for the convenience of a small number of students. Every proposed solution would result in some students be inconvenienced, but **the benefit of a quality education will significantly outweigh those inconveniences**.

Students spend a short four years in high school. The inconveniences of travel time, school location, school colors, etc. last only four years. The education they receive will last a lifetime.

Your vote will change lives. Be strong and courageous. Don't stall. Our students have waited too long. Our students deserve action. **Our students deserve BETTER!**

Vote "YES" to give our students a better present AND future. Vote "YES" on the immediate consolidation plan.

Respectfully,

Anissa M. Anderson
New Martinsville, WV

Final Thoughts

From Rachael Graham <rgrahammjs@gmail.com>

Date Wed 11/20/2024 10:35 PM

To Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; Christine C. Mitchell <christine.mitchell@k12.wv.us>; christinenice@gmail.com <christinenice@gmail.com>; Jimmy Glasscock <jimmy.d.glasscock@k12.wv.us>

Cc Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>; Benjamin McPherson <bmcphers@k12.wv.us>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rgrahammjs@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good evening,

This will (probably) be my final email regarding consolidation as your vote occurs Friday at 9:00 am. I promise to make this one as short as I can.

The only thing that I want each and every one of you to read before voting is the following (you actually heard it at the meeting tonight):

Jackie Shepard spoke this evening, and the quote that I'm going to paraphrase sums up this entire situation for me:

"We can't tell the current 9th through 11th graders and 5th through 8th graders that we don't have the certified teachers or programs they need, but those that come after you, once the new school is built, are going to have amazing opportunities. Our current students matter."

It's time. I'm begging you. Please do not wait on one school. Please make the move now. You are the furthest any board has ever come on this. You have a superintendent that cares about the students and their education and wants to make this county better. There is no time like the present to make this jump.

You heard roughly 120 people speak over the past two weeks, and I will admit most of them were against consolidation. But as of 2023, Wetzel County had 13,890 citizens. What about the 13,770 of us that didn't speak? We want this.

I just want to send my son and daughter to a school system that gives them the education they deserve. One of my closest friends transferred her sixth grader to Tyler County Schools this year. It's incredible. We can get there. We can be that incredible school, even if we are split into two high schools! Please don't force me to make the decision to move my daughter.

I'm begging you to stop cheating our students out of a quality education.
#wewantbetter... now.

Rachael Graham
Exasperated Parent of Two

Second Email:

Good afternoon,

I am writing regarding the previous four meetings that have occurred throughout Wetzel County pertaining to the consolidation. I have also included my previous email below for your reference.

I have listened to each meeting: Magnolia, NMS, PCHS, and Hundred. There are valid points that have been presented against consolidation. These citizens are passionate; they are worried about the kids. I understand that, and I feel empathy towards these parents and children. But I would like to discuss some of the points they've made and present a counterpoint.

1. We have heard many times that if you remove a school from a community, the community will cease to exist. Although I agree that a huge connection exists between school and community, a school being removed should not be the demise of a community. The local government's job is to ensure the community has entities, activities, etc., that would draw citizens in. Looking locally, Moundsville is a community that has a lot to do, but it does not have a high school in city limits. That has not caused Moundsville to fade as they consolidated their schools. As a member of the New Martinsville Junior Sports board, we are not successful because we have a high school. I will not take away from the fact that having the grade school in our town has increased our numbers, but I also like to note that a lot of our players are from Paden City, Hundred, River, and Tyler County. We run a successful program because we are dedicated to our players and their families and want to make their years in youth sports memorable. If a community like Hundred and Paden City are unable to run successful youth programs, draw new businesses, keep the pool open, etc., I don't feel as if removing their high schools are the biggest of their worries.

2. The comments regarding mental health, grandparents raising grandchildren, lack of transportation, etc.: I'm going to lump these discussions into one. As a social worker at my previous job, mental health is very important to me. I have worked with suicidal ideations, homicidal ideations, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, alcoholism, drug addiction, depression, anxiety, and more. I know that these feelings and emotions are valid and should be of concern. I do have concerns regarding the mental health of these high schoolers that are worried about their schools; their feelings are real and should be acknowledged as such. I also know that adversity in life is a lesson that must be learned, though. We all face situations that we disagree with or that make us anxious. How we deal with these situations are the bearing of how we deal in our adult lives. Also, if the kids are having these mental health issues, the parents need to address them with a professional, not the school board and not the superintendent.

I heard many speak about the amount of kids that are living with grandparents or other trusted adults. That is heartbreaking. It's terrible that my generation has become the one that is the least likely to raise their children. But a public school system is responsible for providing a free public education to children. They are responsible for curriculum, ensuring we have qualified teachers, special education, policies, and licensing. At some point in the last ten years, we as a society have lost that vision and have made it the responsibility of the school system to counsel, feed, teach, parent, cloth, and more. I find it alarming the amount of children that don't live with a parent or parents, but it is not the job of

Wetzel County Schools to ensure these kids have adults around them that are capable of conducting adult skills. The same goes for the lack of transportation. I understand lower class, middle class, mental health, etc., can all lead to lack of license, insurance, or vehicle, but it is not Wetzel County School's responsibility to ensure that a family has someone who can provide reliable transportation. At some point, it is for the parents to take accountability. Although I know that won't happen, holding back 300+ children from a better education for the 100 that may have more difficult circumstances isn't working. Saying this statement is not easy for me as I don't ever want a kid to go through these situations, but I have been silent the entire time my children have been in school. I never wanted to say anything to make waves because those kiddos need the extra support. But what about the kids that have the support at home? What about the kids that don't struggle in class? They need this. ALL of the kids need this.

The pleas that I have heard in the last week are all based on emotion, not facts. Yes, it's a hard decision. No, it's probably not a fair one. No, you can't make everyone happy, but it's time. We need certified teachers, we need more programs for successful adults, we need in-person learning, and we don't need NINE school buildings open and operating in Wetzel County. Oil and gas will not be a booming industry forever, and when it dies, we need to be prepared. Please make this decision for the kids, not the parents, not the loud adults with no children, not the people with hometown pride.

I appreciate you all. Each and every one of you. You've sat through roughly 12 hours of speakers, and you have been incredible through each one, even when being screamed at. I applaud your dedication to the county, and I would not want to be in your position. You have my admiration for your strength.

Also, I don't think a train will hit Magnolia High School, and I am also pretty sure the gas plant near Valley High School won't blow up.

Thank you,

Rachael Graham, parent of a kindergartner at NMS and an 11th grader at Magnolia



Original Email:

Dear Board Members,

I am writing regarding the meeting that is going to be held at Magnolia High School. I will probably be there in person, but I will not be signing up to speak as a delegation. The reasoning behind my choice is because I've seen every month the nasty things that are said online about the people that speak out against PCHS or speak in favor of consolidation. I'm not interested in becoming the next social media outrage.

When considering the consolidation, there are some items that I would like you to consider.

I would like to make my opinion very clear: **I am in full support of consolidation, either two schools or one, but I do not fully support the name change/mascot.**

1. Number of Students: There are 626 students in Wetzel County. (The following numbers are based on reports from the National Center for Education Statistics): In PCHS, in grades 7-12, there are 163 students. To be fair, I have taken that number and divided it by six so that we can represent each grade with 27 students. MHS, in grades 9-12, has 343 students; we will be subtracting 15 so as not to count the Pre-K. That is 82 students per grade at MHS.

When the "merger" was announced in the summer of 2024, many of the parents from Paden City were vocal about their children not attending Magnolia High School. Many were enrolling in St. Marys or Tyler County. Even if we take the lower side of these students that won't be attending Magnolia, when consolidated, Magnolia High School **might** receive 80 new students. The number of new students that may possibly go to Magnolia is less than the average per grade at Magnolia currently.

2. Cost: I am currently employed with a company that has discussed and priced a "culture" change or "brand-flip." This has been an ongoing conversation that I have been involved with for many years. I cannot, nor will I attempt to, quote the amount that was given to accomplish a name change, brand-flip, etc. I can say, though, that it was well above a million dollars. This includes all new documentation, mailings, stamps with our logo, name tags, desk plates, and other small items that aren't often considered when thinking about a name change. I believe that getting an estimate of how much each of these "mascot/name" changes is necessary. If the final plan for the county is to have all four schools consolidated, spending over a million dollars for two schools to become one is irresponsible spending. If the plan for the county is to have two schools going forward, creating a new mascot/name for a possibility of 80 students seems to be overkill.

3. Teacher Shortage/Burnout: I've not heard as much about a teacher shortage this year as in the past, but that's only because my son is taking mostly dual credit classes through Northern. Up until this year, my son played Uno a ton in high school. When there wasn't a teacher available, he was sent to the library. I would like to make it known this was NEVER on the principals. It was beyond their control, and I understand that. For the first two years of his high school career, I would say 1/5 or more of it was spent in the library with no teacher.

And I'm sure you know, Wetzel County teachers are burnt out. They're exhausted. From being a teacher, to a social worker, parent, counselor, nurse, event planner, mediator, cook, travel agent, IT, and more, they're tired. Combining these two schools would be a good thing; a great thing, if we're being realistic. The teachers would have breathing room. They can focus more on their students, the curriculum, etc. They would have those others coming from PCHS to lean on, vent to, help, etc. I'm not a teacher, but the people I love most are. And they're incredible. In my career, I can take a day off whenever I need to. I can leave sick. I can go to all of my children's events. And with that, I don't have to worry about making lesson plans, who will cover my classroom, if my students will have a certified teacher, etc. They need help, and the combining of the schools could give them some relief.

4. Opinion/Personal Belief: As the mother of an 11th grader at Magnolia High School and a kindergartner at NMS, I'm just asking for better. I know you've seen it on social media: #wejustwantbetter. My son is almost finished. He has had a really good experience within Wetzel County Schools. He's a 4.0 student, an athlete, and is completing classes through Northern. My daughter is just starting, and I already don't like the projectory she is on. Her class is the first of the COVID babies. She is already struggling because the class is divided by kids that are struggling and have never been in a normal, socialized setting with the kids that are ahead of pace. It's difficult for her teachers to find the balance between these students, but I think this would be an issue anywhere.

What I'm most concerned about is that if the schools are not consolidated (into one or two schools for the entire county), her education is only going to get worse. If there is no progress in Wetzel County, my daughter will not be a part of this school system. I'm sure you hear it all the time: "I will just move my kid." I don't like pulling that card or even contemplating moving her, but I will not allow my kids to be a product of injustice. I will not allow 20-30 loud, disrespectful, nasty people from Paden City to dictate my daughter's education and her future life goals.

I know this email is long, but I had to get it sent to you before the meeting occurs. Please know that the majority of people I know (the silent ones) feel that this is a step forward for our county. Our kids deserve better. All kids: Paden City, Magnolia, Hundred, and Valley. For every loudmouth that disagrees with you or disrespects you is at least 2-3 parents that are so excited for the possibility of a better school system through Wetzel County.

Thank you for your time!

Just a quick note!

From Anita Howell <amhowell@k12.wv.us>
Date Mon 11/18/2024 11:24 AM
To Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

After watching the board meeting Friday evening, I just want to say that you are the strongest lady I think I have ever known. You are doing what is right for the students in Wetzel County, and I am proud to say that we have a superintendent that is strong enough to stand up to the opposition. Thank you for all you do!

*Anita Howell
7/8 Reading and ELA Teacher
New Martinsville School*

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss

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Message to BOE in Support of Consolidation

From Anissa Anderson <andersonortho@hotmail.com>

Date Sun 11/17/2024 9:44 PM

To Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

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From: Anissa Anderson <andersonortho@hotmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 5:51 PM

To: Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; Christine Mitchell <mcmitchell@frontier.com>; Christine Nice <christinenice@gmail.com>; Jimmy Glasscock <co1pres@frontier.com>; Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>

Subject: Support for Consolidation

Thank you for your dedication by serving on the Wetzel County Board of Education. Your job is not easy. Your courage is respected and appreciated.

This correspondence is to state **our support of the Superintendent of Wetzel County Schools and the consolidation plan** contained in the impact statement posted on October 11, 2024.

Consolidation needs to begin next school year instead of waiting until a new building is constructed. This plan will give our students and personnel the hope that even better things are coming in the future. If consolidation is delayed for four to five years, the current high school students will have the same or fewer course options. Morale will continue to decrease. Without change, the personnel workload will remain the same or increase which could lead to the exodus of more personnel.

Our daughter describes the problem as similar to four boats that are taking on water with only one maintenance crew to fix all four. If the passengers are combined into two boats, that leaves only two boats needing repair and those repairs can be made quickly and efficiently thus preventing the boats from sinking... while a new boat is on the way. If the passengers are left in the four boats without adequate repairs while waiting on the new boat to arrive, the solitary maintenance crew would not be able to repair the leaks and ultimately each boat would begin to sink. Would it be right... would it be ethical to leave all four boats to sink simply because combining boats would require some passengers to change? When the new boat arrives, the passengers would be better equipped and experienced to handle the change to the new boat.

We should keep the expected changes with this consolidation plan in perspective. Our grandfather's and their classmates spent their last year of high school preparing to be drafted into World War II. Their

younger siblings left high school for the front lines in the Korean Conflict. Our uncles were drafted out of high school to serve in the armed forces in Vietnam. We are grateful that our high school students are not facing the uncertainties and brutality of war. Our high schools students are being given an opportunity to continue their educations safely in their home county... to broaden their educations by unifying with their peers.

We witnessed first hand the beginning of this unification last summer when Magnolia and Paden City volleyball players had joint flex practices. **It was remarkable!** It was not like the adults on social media had predicted or feared. The players were quiet and shy at first but within a few hours began to interact and respond as a team. They encouraged and celebrated each other's efforts. High fives and shouts of support were offered without regard to whether the player was from Magnolia or Paden City. The coaches collaborated and shared duties and responsibilities to make each practice productive.

It was working. It had potential. The girls were hopeful.

It can happen again. The kids are capable. **The kids are more than capable... they are ready!** Give them the chance. Don't let them sink!

Anissa and Danny Anderson
New Martinsville, WV

Fw: School consolidation

From Benjamin McPherson <bmcphers@k12.wv.us>

Date Fri 11/15/2024 9:25 AM

To Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; christinenice@gmail.com <christinenice@gmail.com>; Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; Christine C. Mitchell <christine.mitchell@k12.wv.us>; co1pres@frontier.com <co1pres@frontier.com>

Cc Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

Received this email this morning. Passing it along.

Ben



"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." Gen. George S. Patton

"There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."— John F. Kennedy

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From: Cindy Lemasters <cindylemasters4@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2024 8:33 AM
To: Benjamin McPherson <bmcphers@k12.wv.us>
Subject: School consolidation

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you in regards to the school consolidation. I am in favor of it because I have 2 grandchildren that attend high school at Magnolia.

For the most part they are getting a satisfactory education but it could be better. The high school is short staffed and they have had to go to 2 classes that are combined into 1 class period together.

There has been non certified teachers that have taught them.

Now for our athletic programs. We don't have air conditioning in the gymnasium when activities such as graduation is held there occasionally and the heat is unbearable.

It is hard to have any home track meets because the high jumpers and pole vaulters have to travel elsewhere to practice because the area is unsafe.

There are not enough students in the county for this many schools. Now is the time to consolidate.

Sincerely,
Cindy Lemasters
1st A Concerned Memaw
2nd An MHS Alumna
Sent from my iPhone

Fw: School Consolidation

From Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

Date Sun 11/17/2024 3:31 PM

To Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; Christine C. Mitchell <christine.mitchell@k12.wv.us>; Christine Nice <christine.nice@k12.wv.us>; co1pres@frontier.com <co1pres@frontier.com>

Cassie R. Porter

Wetzel County Superintendent

Principal of the Year 2023



Educating Individuals for Success

(304) 281-1505 (cell)

crporter@k12.wv.us

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From: Cindy Lemasters <cindylemasters4@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2024 8:31 AM

To: Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

Subject: School Consolidation

[You don't often get email from cindylemasters4@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Now for our athletic programs. We don't have air conditioning in the gymnasium when activities such as graduation is held there occasionally and the heat is unbearable.

It is hard to have any home track meets because the high jumpers and pole vaulters have to travel elsewhere to practice because the area is unsafe.

There are not enough students in the county for this many schools. Now is the time to consolidate.

Sincerely,
Cindy Lemasters
1st A Concerned Memaw
2nd An MHS Alumna
Sent from my iPhone

A personal thank you

From Kimberly Myers <xxkimberly_dawnxx@yahoo.com>

Date Thu 11/14/2024 8:46 PM

To Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

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Thank you! I just wanted to reach out and say thank you for all of your efforts in closing PCHS and consolidating with Magnolia. I am a 2007 graduate of Magnolia High School. My sister, husband, and parents all graduated from the same school.

This is something that should have been done years ago when I was still in attendance. I currently have a sophomore at MHS and a 2nd grader at NMS. I chose to continue living in this town, because I wanted to see my children graduate from the same school that I did. Numbers have dwindled so much over the years and I think consolidation would be such a wonderful thing for the kids and school system.

I know you're receiving a lot of backlash over the situation and I just wanted to take a moment to thank you. So many of us believe that you are doing the right thing. You are what our county needs. Keep pushing!!

Sent from my iPhone



Idea for a name for the 4 schools consolidate.

From Christian Smith <cjsmith13@stu.k12.wv.us>

Date Fri 10/18/2024 9:43 AM

To Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

My idea is Unity High School. All four high schools would be unifying into one, and I feel as if that name would show that we only want peace with one another.

Christian Smith
Junior@PCHS

Consolidation

From stan4@suddenlink.net <stan4@suddenlink.net>

Date Tue 10/8/2024 5:51 PM

To Linda Fonner <lfonner@k12.wv.us>; Brian Castilow <bcastilo@k12.wv.us>; co1pres@frontier.com <co1pres@frontier.com>; Christine C. Mitchell <christine.mitchell@k12.wv.us>; christinenice@gmail.com <christinenice@gmail.com>

Cc Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from stan4@suddenlink.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL SENDER]: Do not click links, open attachments or reply to this email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I have taught in Wetzel County Schools for seventeen years. My children graduated from Magnolia. My grandchildren will be educated in Wetzel County schools. I feel as if I have a stake in what happens in Wetzel County schools.

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting and so I am writing to express my support for the proposal to consolidate the four high schools into two high schools for the 2025-26 school year. As a member of the community, I believe that this consolidation will bring about numerous benefits, including improved resource allocation, a more comprehensive curriculum, and enhanced extracurricular opportunities for students.

Consolidating the high schools will allow for a more efficient use of resources, which in turn can lead to improved facilities and expanded educational programs. Additionally, a consolidated system can foster a more equitable distribution of resources and staffing, ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education and support services.

I am confident that this decision will lead to a more robust and cohesive high school experience for students, ultimately enhancing the overall educational environment in our community. I urge you to carefully consider this proposal and its potential positive impact on our school district.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Danielle Standiford

Wetzel County Schools

From jennifer kolat <jenniferkolat@yahoo.com>

Date Mon 9/16/2024 11:41 AM

To Cassandra Porter <crporter@k12.wv.us>

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[EXTERNAL SENDER]: Do not click links, open attachments or reply to this email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Porter,

While I'm sure you have received numerous emails, phone calls, etc, I feel obligated to send an email. I do apologize as I'm sure you're overwhelmed. That is to say if I were in your shoes I'm certain I would be overwhelmed, stressed, tired and likely a bit frustrated. Therefore I will attempt to be brief and to the point.

What is best for the students? Where and how will they flourish the best? Where and how will they become the most well rounded, reach their full potential, prepared for their future (whatever that may be? Not the teachers, the citizens, the alumnus, but solely the students. That should be the concern, in my opinion. A shortage of qualified teachers has led to students spending their time playing video games, playing in the gym or simply "hanging out". Uncertified teachers who lack experience often become child sitters, to no fault of their own of course. It's just reality.

While small schools can and do offer many benefits such as close friendships and one on one teaching. It also lacks diversity and constructive differences of opinion and outlooks on life in general. Students from a school with 70 - 150 students are very easily overwhelmed when it's time to step out into the world. Have they learned how to work independently? How to research on their own to find the answer? How to handle opposition? How to thrive in different environments? How to work to achieve goals when the competition is stronger? Again, I do understand and appreciate the benefits of a small school. The enrollment of our small schools has become a bit alarming in teaching our youth things outside of required subjects.

It has been mentioned that merging schools together will take away the privilege of some students qualifying for participating in high school sports and having that experience. While I understand that concern I would counter with the idea of with the benefits of providing students with the ability to thrive, achieve and experience a winning season. My sons were transferred out of Wetzel County schools solely due to a lack of education they were receiving. Sports were the least of my concern. That is until I witnessed them reach their potential in sports I did not realize the benefits. It instilled a very strong work ethic in them. Both physical and emotional. How to celebrate a win with class and humility and how to accept a loss with dignity while using it as motivation to work harder. I see students here in Wetzel who have never had the opportunity to feel that feeling of accomplishment and success due to what they have put into it. As is life success, you must learn how to overcome and push forward. Are Wetzel

students having these life lessons?

I do apologize for the longevity of this note. Please know that while some are louder than others, there is support on doing what is best for students and not solely for the community. I heard a community member say that larger schools aren't for everyone and only some kids would benefit from it. To which I say, who decides the fate of those kids? Who gets to judge if this one should go to a better school or this one should stay here? I believe in equal opportunity regardless of someone's opinion or what they feel is a student's limitation. Judging them by their background, upbringing is simply wrong.

In conclusion, I know you have a huge weight on your shoulders. I encourage you to step back and imagine your child. What would be best for him or her?

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Kolat

Date November 22, 2024

<u>Special</u>	<u>Board of Education Office</u>	<u>Linda M. Fonner, President</u>
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
 COUNTY OF WETZEL, to-wit:

The Wetzel County Board of Education met in Special Session pursuant to the provisions of SLWV §18-5-4 at the Board of Education. Linda M. Fonner, President of the Wetzel County Board of Education, called for a Special Meeting to be held at 9:00 a.m., on Friday, November 22, 2024, at the Wetzel County Board of Education Office, 333 Foundry Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia. The following members were present:

Brian L. Castilow	Christine Mitchell
Linda M. Fonner	Christine Nice
Jimmy D. Glasscock	Cassandra Porter, Secretary

OPENING, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND MOMENT OF SILENCE:

This Special Session of the Wetzel County Board of Education was called to order by the President of the Board, Mrs. Linda M. Fonner. Mrs. Nice led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silence.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS CONSOLIDATION INTO MAGNOLIA HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW MARTINSVILLE SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR:

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the recommendation for the closure of Paden City High School and its consolidation into Magnolia High School and New Martinsville School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Nice and the motion was approved with a 4 to 1 vote:

Mr. Castilow	aye	Mrs. Mitchell	aye
Mrs. Fonner	aye	Mrs. Nice	aye
Mr. Glasscock	nay		

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CLOSURE OF HUNDRED HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS CONSOLIDATION INTO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR:

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the recommendation for the closure of Hundred High School and its consolidation into Valley High School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Nice and the motion was approved with a 3 to 2 vote:

Mr. Castilow	nay	Mrs. Mitchell	aye
Mrs. Fonner	aye	Mrs. Nice	aye
Mr. Glasscock	nay		

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE AMENDMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION FACILITIES PLAN (CEFP) FOR THE CLOSURE OF PADEN CITY HIGH SCHOOL:

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the recommendation of the amendments for the Comprehensive Education Facilities Plan (CEFP) for the closure of Paden City High School. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Nice and the motion was approved with a 4 to 1 vote:

Mr. Castilow	aye	Mrs. Mitchell	aye
Mrs. Fonner	aye	Mrs. Nice	aye
Mr. Glasscock	nay		

Date November 22, 2024

Special	Board of Education Office	Linda M. Fonner, President
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE AMENDMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION FACILITIES PLAN (CEFP) FOR THE CLOSURE OF HUNDRED HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the recommendation of the amendments for the Comprehensive Education Facilities Plan (CEFP) for the closure of Hundred High School. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Nice and the motion was approved with a 3 to 2 vote:

Mr. Castilow	nay	Mrs. Mitchell	aye
Mrs. Fonner	aye	Mrs. Nice	aye
Mr. Glasscock	nay		

RECESS – A recess was not needed at this time.

PRESENTATIONS:

-American Education Proclamation: Cassandra Porter

Mrs. Porter commemorated the observance of American Education Week with the reading of a proclamation. She noted that November 18-22, 2024 marks the 103rd year for this observance. Following the reading, the Board members signed the proclamation. As an expression of gratitude, all staff will be dismissed at 12:15 p.m. on Friday, December 20, 2024.

-Long Drain School: Jeremy Kelch

Mr. Kelch, Long Drain School Principal, provided the Board with a handout and shared a PowerPoint presentation on a proposal of a back-up plan for the future of Long Drain School (LDS) if the state approves the consolidation of Hundred High School (HHS) into Valley High School (VHS). In his talk, Mr. Kelch proposed moving LDS into the former HHS building starting the 2025-2026 school year. He suggested this could help the community adjust to the loss of the high school. Mr. Kelch discussed the following: safety and accessibility with this move to town; issues at both LDS and HHS; and building layout with the proposed move. He first presented his plan to the Faculty Senate President, Mrs. Fluharty, then to the LDS Leadership Team and then to the staff.

SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting – October 22, 2024

Acting on the Superintendent’s recommendation, Mr. Castilow made the motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Meeting, October 22, 2024. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

Personnel Matters:

Retirements:

Jo Beth Simmons Acceptance of retirement from position as Executive Secretary/Elections Coordinator, effective the end of day January 10, 2025.

Resignations:

Derek A. Graham Acceptance of resignation from position as 7/8 girls’ basketball Coach at New Martinsville School, effective October 23, 2024.

Nora McDiffitt Acceptance of resignation from position as countywide substitute secretary/coordinator, effective November 1, 2024.

Date November 22, 2024

Special	Board of Education Office	Linda M. Fonner, President
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

Professional Personnel:

- Lydia Andlinger Approval for employment as Speech Language Pathologist at New Martinsville School, effective December 2, 2024.
- Darren L. Cook Approval for employment as countywide substitute Teacher, effective December 2, 2024.
- Kayla Henthorn Approval for change in assignment from countywide substitute Teacher to Special Education Teacher at Paden City High School, effective December 2, 2024.
- Jenna Jaskowiak Approval for employment as Speech Language Pathologist Assistant at New Martinsville School, pending background check.
- Kathleen Miller Approval for employment as countywide substitute Teacher, effective December 2, 2024.
- Alana Minor Approval for change in assignment from Special Education Teacher at Hundred High School to Special Education Teacher at Long Drain School, effective the 2025-2026 school year.
- Alyssa Minor Approval for change in assignment from Special Education Teacher at Short Line School to 4th grade Teacher at Short Line School, effective the 2025-2026 school year.
- Dillon R. Smittle Approval for employment as countywide substitute Teacher, effective December 2, 2024.
- Donna G. Smittle Approval for employment as countywide substitute Teacher, effective December 2, 2024.
- Jeana L. Yoho Approval for employment as countywide non-certified substitute Teacher, effective December 2, 2024.

Service Personnel:

- Teena Bates Approval for change in assignment from Coordinator of PR/Return-to-Work/Secretary/Attendance at County Office to Executive Secretary and Elections Coordinator/Secretary II/Computer Operator, effective January 13, 2025.
- April Daugherty Approval for change in assignment from custodian at New Martinsville School to Cook at Long Drain School, effective pending replacement.
- Elizabeth Hall Approval for employment as countywide substitute Cook, effective pending background check.
- Shannon L. Hornbeck Approval for employment as countywide substitute Custodian, effective December 2, 2024
- Jessica Kelly Approval for change in assignment from countywide substitute Aide to Special Education Aide with Autism at Paden City Elementary, effective December 2, 2024.
- Jo Beth Simmons Approval for employment as substitute Coordinator/ Executive Secretary, effective January 13, 2025.

Date November 22, 2024

<u>Special</u> Kind of Meeting	<u>Board of Education Office</u> Where Held	<u>Linda M. Fonner, President</u> Presiding Officer
Ray P. Stoneking	Approval for change in assignment from countywide substitute Bus Operator to Bus Operator, Bus #16-2, Kodol/Earnshaw/Rush Run, effective January 1, 2025.	
Stephen T. Tennant	Approval for employment as countywide substitute Custodian, effective December 2, 2024.	
Adriana Walton	Approval for employment as countywide substitute Cook, effective December 2, 2024.	
Samantha Wilkinson	Approval for change in assignment from countywide substitute Aide to Special Education Aide with Autism at New Martinsville School, effective December 2, 2024.	
Waneta Yoho	Approval for change in assignment from evening Custodian at Hundred High School to Head Custodian at Hundred High School, 261-day contract, effective December 2, 2024.	
<u>Extracurricular:</u>		
Penelope Baker	Approval for employment as winter Evening Events Coordinator at Paden City High School, effective the beginning of the 2024-2025 WVSSAC season.	
William Bell	Approval for employment as Mentor Teacher – Health/PE at Paden City High School, effective the 2024-2025 school year.	
Amy Cisar	Approval for employment as Mentor Teacher – Emotional Support Specialist at New Martinsville School, effective the 2024-2025 school year.	
Stephanie Fritzman	Approval for employment as LINKS Coordinator at Paden City High School, effective December 2, 2024.	
Jessica Mace	Approval for employment as Assistant Boys’ Basketball Coach at Long Drain School, effective the beginning of the 2024-2025 WVSSAC season.	
Eric Piekarski	Approval for employment as Academic Coach at Paden City High School, effective December 2, 2024.	
Jamie Snedden	Approval for employment as winter Evening Events Coordinator at Long Drain School, effective the beginning of the 2024-25 WVSSAC season.	
Elisa Sprowl	Approval for employment as 1 st grade Countywide Leader, effective the 2024-2025 school year.	
Terry Steele	Approval for employment as 3 rd grade Countywide Leader, effective the 2024-2025 school year.	

Leave of Absence:

Approval of request from Kayla Semple for a maternity leave of absence from her position as Math Teacher at Magnolia High School, effective approximately February 18 – April 16, 2025.

Date November 22, 2024

<u>Special</u>	<u>Board of Education Office</u>	<u>Linda M. Fonner, President</u>
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

Approval of request from Joseph Semple for a family medical leave of absence from his position as Special Education Teacher at Paden City Elementary, effective approximately February 18 – February 28, 2025.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED UNDER PERSONNEL MATTERS:

Prior to the motion, Mrs. Fonner requested to pull Darren Cook from the Professional Personnel list to be voted on as a separate item. Mr. Castilow made the motion for approval of the Superintendent’s recommendations as outlined under Personnel Matters, with the exclusion of the pulled professional personnel position as mentioned above to be voted on separately. Second to the motion was made by Mr. Glasscock and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

Executive Session:

Mrs. Fonner moved and Mr. Glasscock seconded the motion for unanimous approval to retire into Executive Session, per WV Code §6-9A-4(b-2-A), for the discussion of personnel matters relating to the professional personnel position pulled from the above item. The Board retired in Executive Session at 9:41 a.m. Following the Executive Session, Mrs. Fonner moved and Mrs. Nice seconded the motion for unanimous approval to return to Open Session at 9:48 a.m. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 9:50 a.m. with the following:

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the Superintendent’s recommendation as outlined under Professional Personnel matters for Darren Cook: employment as countywide substitute Teacher. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and the motion was approved with a 3 to 2 vote:

Mr. Castilow	aye	Mrs. Mitchell	aye
Mrs. Fonner	nay	Mrs. Nice	aye
Mr. Glasscock	nay		

Ratification of Superintendent’s Recommendation:

Executive Session:

Mr. Castilow moved and Mrs. Nice seconded the motion for unanimous approval to retire into Executive Session, per WV Code §6-9A-4(b-2-A), for the discussion of personnel matters. The Board retired in Executive Session at 9:52 a.m. Following the Executive Session, Mrs. Fonner moved and Mrs. Nice seconded the motion for unanimous approval to return to Open Session at 9:58 a.m. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 9:59 a.m. with the following:

Consideration and possible action on the superintendent’s recommendation that an extracurricular employee’s unpaid suspension and termination of contract be ratified by the Board:

Mrs. Cassandra Porter, Superintendent, made the recommendation that the Board ratify the recommendation for the unpaid suspension and termination of contract for Thomas Duncan. Mr. Glasscock made the motion to uphold the Superintendent’s recommendation for the unpaid suspension and termination of contract for Thomas Duncan. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and the motion was passed unanimously by the members of the Board.

Date November 22, 2024

<u>Special</u>	<u>Board of Education Office</u>	<u>Linda M. Fonner, President</u>
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

Consideration and possible action on the superintendent’s recommendation that a service employee’s one-day unpaid suspension be ratified by the Board:

Mrs. Cassandra Porter, Superintendent, made the recommendation that the Board ratify the recommendation for the one-day unpaid suspension for Beth Smith. Mr. Glasscock made the motion to uphold the Superintendent’s recommendation for the one-day unpaid suspension for Beth Smith. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Fonner and the motion was passed unanimously by the members of the Board.

Routine Matters:

Chaperones/Volunteers:

Approval of request from the School Principal for the following Chaperones/Volunteers for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year.

Long Drain School:

Sara Price

Magnolia High School:

J. Adam Herrick
Chelsey Milliken
Garrett Cox

New Martinsville School:

Iriaddeth Venegas	Hannah Jones	Bobby Jones
Madison Ash	Karri Davis	Hanna Hall
Amy Bennett	Michael Urbanek	Amy Urbanek
Christine Racer	Alexa Schupbach	Steven Hoagland
Melonie Hoagland		

Paden City High School:

Lisa Shreves

Short Line School:

Chelsey Johnston
Shawn Johnston

Work Release:

Approval of request from Jane Beckett, Principal, and Jessica Mace, School Counselor for a senior at Valley High School to be excused every day after 4th period and drive personal vehicle to participate in the Work Release program. Student is currently on track in meeting all graduation requirements.

Commencement Date Revisions:

Approval to change the Commencement dates as follows:
 Magnolia High School: from May 22, 2025 to May 29, 2025
 Valley High School: from May 23, 2025 to May 30, 2025
 Hundred High School: from May 24, 2025 to May 31, 2025
 Paden City High School: from May 24, 2025 to May 31, 2025

Out of State Trips:

Approval of request from Melonie Miller, Principal, for Jacob Hoskins to attend the Midwest Band Clinic in Chicago, IL, December 17-20, 2024. Funded by Mr. Hoskins.

WETZEL COUNTY SCHOOLS

Date November 22, 2024

Special Board of Education Office Linda M. Fonner, President
Kind of Meeting Where Held Presiding Officer

Use of Facilities:

Approval of request from Eric Emch, Principal, for the Shortline Lions Club to use the Short Line School kitchen and cafeteria for Breakfast with Santa on December 14, 2024.

Release from Wetzel County Schools:

Approval of requests to be released from Wetzel County Schools for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year, as submitted.

Lease Agreement:

Approval for continued lease agreement with Huskie Lumber Company, Inc. for property on Route 7 leased from the Huskie Lumber Company (for parking buses in the Hundred Area) beginning October 16, 2024 through October 15, 2025 for \$2,400.00.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED UNDER ROUTINE MATTERS:

Mr. Castilow made the motion for approval of the Superintendent's recommendations as outlined under Routine Matters. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Nice and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Approval for Payment of Bills for the Month of October, 2024 (invoices approved at this meeting are available for review at the Wetzel County Schools' Financial Office); and Approval for Transfers and Increases in the Budget:

Mrs. Fonner made the motion for approval of the Payment of Bills for the Month of October, 2024. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board. There were no Transfers and Increases in the Budget.

FIRST AND SECOND READING OF REVISED WETZEL COUNTY POLICIES:

FIRST READING	SECOND READING	NEW POLICY	REVISED POLICY	DELETE POLICY	NAME OF POLICY	ORIGINATOR
	X		X		GCB: Employee Contracts and Compensation Plans	Jeff Lancaster
X			X		IGB: Alternative Education Programs for Disruptive Students	Todd Barcus
X			X		JEAA: Compulsory School Attendance	Todd Barcus

Approval of First and Second Reading of Revised Policies GCB, IGB, and JEAA as listed above:

Copies of the policies were provided in Board member packets and also located at www.wetzelcountyschools.com for public review. Mrs. Nice made the motion to approve the second reading of Revised Policy GCB and first reading of Revised Policies IGB and JEAA. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS:

December 10, 2024 – Regular Meeting at County Office, 6:00 p.m.

WETZEL COUNTY SCHOOLS

Date November 22, 2024

<u>Special</u>	<u>Board of Education Office</u>	<u>Linda M. Fonner, President</u>
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, Mrs. Nice made the motion to adjourn this Special Meeting. Mr. Castilow seconded the motion for unanimous approval to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

President

Secretary

DRAFT