



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

February 12, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Chairman

SUBJECT: Report on Request for Consolidation of Atherton Community Schools and Bentley Community Schools

In January the Office of the Superintendent received a communication from Thomas Svitkovich, Superintendent, Genesee Intermediate School District, regarding a request from the Boards of the Atherton Community Schools and the Bentley Community Schools to consider consolidation of the two school districts.

Section 380.852 of the Revised School Code allows for local school boards to initiate proceedings for consolidation. Executive Order 1996-12 transferred the approval authority from the State Board to the Superintendent.

On January 24, 2003, I approved the election plans for Atherton Community Schools and Bentley Community Schools to consolidate into one school district. In order for the consolidation request to become effective, it will require an affirmative vote of the electors in all three school districts.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2413 West Maple Avenue, Flint, Michigan 48507-3493
(810) 591-4400 Fax (810) 591-7570 TTY (810) 591-4545
www.genesceisd.org

January 23, 2003

Mr. Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Michigan Department of Education
Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Watkins:

I am writing regarding requests we have received from two Genesee County school districts to conduct a consolidation vote. Included you will find copies of resolutions from the Atherton Community Schools and the Bentley Community Schools requesting that we initiate proceedings for the consolidation of their districts consistent with Public Act 451 of 1976, the Revised School Code, Section 380.852. Section 852(1) of the above-mentioned statute indicates that should the intermediate school district receive resolutions requesting the initiation of proceedings for consolidation, the intermediate superintendent shall refer the question to the State Board for its approval. We understand that as a result of an Executive Order, you as the State Superintendent, may approve this request for a consolidation vote. The resolutions specify that a consolidation vote take place on March 31, 2003; therefore, our timeline for approval is very tight.

As you recall, a consolidation vote was held this past month in three Genesee County school districts. The citizens of the Atherton Community Schools, Bendle Public Schools and the Bentley Community Schools voted on December 9, 2002. The results of that vote affirmed consolidation in both Atherton and Bentley. However, the voters of Bendle rejected the issue. Therefore, the boards of both Atherton and Bentley decided to ask their voters to approve a consolidation dropping Bendle from the ballot.

School district consolidation has been a point of discussion in the City of Burton for many years. Many news articles and editorials have been written regarding the process and possibilities for consolidation. Over time, feasibility studies have also been completed weighing the benefits. The two most recent studies, one completed by Mr. William Young, current Atherton interim superintendent, and the November-December 2001 EPIC MRA survey provided positive results related to consolidation.

Based on the information I have reviewed, the results of the most recent election and the long-standing history of this continuing consolidation discussion here in Genesee County, it is my best recommendation that the consolidation question be put before the voters of the Atherton Community Schools and the Bentley Community Schools. I have discussed this recommendation with the members of the Genesee Intermediate School District Board of Education, and they individually concur. I recommend that you authorize the election in order that the districts can begin immediately to move forward with the necessary scheduling details.

Paul D. Newman, President ♦ Peggy J. Tortorice, Vice President
William R. Walworth, Secretary ♦ Lawrence P. Ford, Treasurer ♦ Sondra K. Jackson, Trustee

Thomas Svitkovich, Ed.D., Superintendent ♦ Thomas B. Princinsky, Deputy Superintendent
Beverly Knox-Pipes, Assistant Superintendent ♦ Mary E. Lavengood, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent ♦ Jan D. Russell, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.
January 20, 2003
Page 2

Should you wish further information or an opportunity to discuss specifics with me, please do not hesitate to make contact. Please be assured that I most certainly appreciate your review and consideration, particularly on behalf of the students and constituents of the Atherton and Bentley Schools.

Sincerely,



Thomas Svitkovich, Ed.D.
Superintendent

TS:lk

Enclosures

- c: William Young, Atherton Community Schools
- Bruce Kefgen, Bentley Community Schools
- Genesee ISD Board of Education

ATHERTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION REQUESTING GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
TO CONDUCT A CONSOLIDATION VOTE FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS
OF ATHERTON AND BENTLEY

At a special meeting of the Board of Education (the "Board") of Atherton Community Schools (the "School District"), County of Genesee, Michigan, on the 22nd of January, 2003 at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by R. LaDuke, President

Present: R. LaDuke, R. Walls, G. Isham, P. Hildreth, D. Roach, B. Bigsby,
D. Willingham

Absent: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member G. Isham and supported by Member R. Walls.

WHEREAS:

1. The Board of Education is authorized pursuant to the provisions of Section 852 of the School Code of 1976, as amended, to submit a resolution to the Intermediate Superintendent regarding the question of consolidating school districts; and
2. The Board has considered the consolidation of the Atherton Community School District with Bentley Community School District; and
3. The Board desires the Superintendent of the Genesee Intermediate School District to proceed to receive approval of the State Board of Education to conduct a consolidation election.

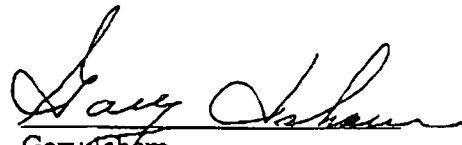
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Superintendent of Genesee Intermediate School District is hereby requested to refer the question of consolidating the Atherton Community School District with the Bentley Community School District to the State Board of Education for its approval.
2. The Intermediate Superintendent is further requested to advise the State Board that the date requested for the consolidation election is March 31, 2003.
3. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ayes: R. LaDuke, R. Walls, G. Isham, P. Hildreth

Nays: D. Roach, B. Bigsby, D. Willingham

Motion declared adopted. 4-3 Roll Call Vote.

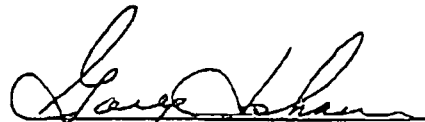


Gary Isham

Secretary

Atherton Board of Education

The undersigned duly qualified and acting secretary of the Board of Education of Atherton Community Schools, Genesee County, Michigan, hereby certifies the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Education at a regular meeting held on January 22, 2003, the original of which resolution is a part of the Board's minutes and further certifies that notice of the meeting was given to the public under the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, as amended.



Gary Isham

Secretary

Atherton Board of Education

RESOLUTION TO PETITION STATE FOR A MERGER VOTE

Bentley Community School District
1170 N. Belsay Rd.
Burton, MI 48509

Bentley Community School District in the County of Genesee, Michigan ("The District").

A special meeting of the board of education (the "Board") of the District was held in the Administration Office in the District on the 21st Day of January, 2003, at 7:00 o'clock in the evening.

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Perry, President.

Present: N. Perry, S. West, A. Baker, B. Burger, D. Elkins

Absent: P. James

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member Nancy Perry and supported by Member Sandy West.

WHEREAS:

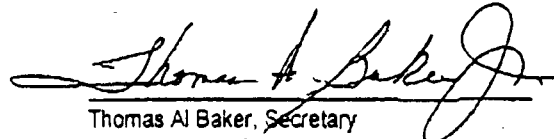
1. The Board of Education is authorized pursuant to the provisions of Section 852 of the School Code of 1976, as amended, to submit a resolution to the Intermediate Superintendent regarding the questions of consolidating school districts; and
2. The Board has considered the consolidation of the Bentley School District with Atherton Community Schools; and
3. The Board desires the Superintendent of the Genesee Intermediate School District to proceed to receive approval of the State Board of Education to conduct a consolidation election.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

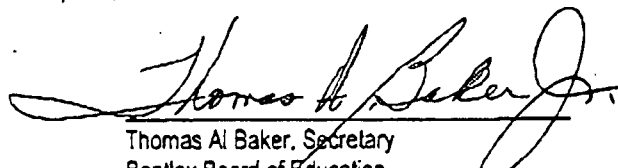
1. The Superintendent of Genesee Intermediate School District is hereby requested to refer the question of consolidating the Bentley Community School District with the Atherton Community Schools to the State Board of Education for its approval.
2. The Intermediate Superintendent is further requested to advise the State Board that the date requested for the consolidation election is March 31, 2003.
3. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ayes: Members — N. Perry, S. West, A. Baker, B. Burger, D. Elkins

Nays: Members None


Thomas Al Baker, Secretary
Bentley Board of Education

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Secretary of the Board of Education of Bentley Community School District in the County of Genesee, Michigan, hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at a special meeting held on January 21, 2003, the original of which resolution is a part of the Board's minutes, and further certifies that notice of the meeting was given to the public under the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, as amended.


Thomas Al Baker, Secretary
Bentley Board of Education