

Mahtomedi Public Schools
Independent School District #832
1520 Mahtomedi Avenue
Mahtomedi, MN 55115

Regular Meeting - Board of Education

Date: April 14, 2016

Agenda Item #10. F

TOPIC: Petition to consolidate Mahtomedi School District #832 and Stillwater School District #834

On March 16, a public meeting, as required by state statute MS 123A.48, subdivision 8, was chaired by Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Commissioner Brenda Cassellius for the purpose of examining a plat (map) and supporting statement as well as considering information presented by petitioners who requested the consolidation of the Stillwater Area School District and Mahtomedi Public Schools. The petition was submitted to the MDE on January 29, 2016 and was signed by 50 residents of Stillwater and Mahtomedi districts.

According to state law, Commissioner Cassellius is required to examine the plat and supporting statements and approve, modify, or reject it after a minimum of 20 days but no more than 60 days from the date of the receipt. In a March 21, 2016, letter, Cassellius deemed that the letter of the statute had been met, which means she is turning the decision over to the Stillwater and Mahtomedi school boards. Each of the school boards must either adopt or reject the plan. According to the letter from Commissioner Cassellius, "If the board of either district rejects the plan, the proceedings are terminated and dismissed."

In presenting her determination, Commissioner Cassellius also outlined information that was missing from the petitioners' request. Specifically, the petitioners did not provide information about major financial impacts on the taxpayers of the two school districts including:

- A resolution to imbalances in taxpayer current and future debt
- The levies or capital loan obligations of the existing or consolidated district
- The impact of consolidation on local taxpayers
- The governance structure of the new district

In addition to the financial impact information, the petitioners did not:

- Identify a process for consolidation
- Identify a process for determining which students and staff would be moved to other schools due to restructuring

The Mahtomedi School Board should act because, "If any school board is unable to obtain a majority of its members' votes to accept or reject the plan, a petition of residents of the district

unable to obtain a majority of votes equal to 20 percent of the votes cast in the last school district general election in that district may be submitted to the county auditor requesting a public vote to accept or reject the plan.”

By having a majority of the Mahtomedi School Board members act by voting, the proceedings are terminated and by acting, the county auditor must not accept the request of the petitioners.

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Formally reject the Petition to consolidate Mahtomedi School District #832 and Stillwater School District #834 thereby ending the proceedings.

Submitted By:

Mark Larson

Name

Superintendent of Schools

Title

Concurrence By:

Mark Larson

Dr. Mark Larson

Superintendent of Schools