

VILLAGE OF ATHENS

Trustees:
Gail Lasher (Deputy Mayor)
Rickie Gabrielle
Nancy Poylo
Josh Lipsman

Incorporated 1805
2 First Street
Athens, New York 12015
Tel. (518) 945-1551
Fax (518) 945-1668

Mayor:
Amy Serrago

Code Enforcement Officers:
Ed Tercasio
Jeff Ruso

Attorney for Village:
Tal Rappleyea

Clerk-Treasurer:
Mary Jo Wynne

October _____, 2021

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Edward J. Arthur Elementary School (“EJA”) located in the Village of Athens is vital to the education of the children in Athens and to the overall health, welfare and prosperity of the community,

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Schools of the Coxsackie-Athens Central School District attended a Village Board meeting on June 23, 2021 and presented a plan to reconfigure grade groupings (hereinafter “Reconfiguration”) that would change EJA from a Kindergarten through 4th grade (K – 4) school for the southern region of the District to Pre-Kindergarten through 2nd grade (preK – 2) for the entire District,

WHEREAS, the current three-tier school system comprising two Elementary Schools (K-4), a Middle School (5th - 8th grade) and a High School (9th – 12th grade) would be Reconfigured to four tiers comprising an Early Learning Center (preK-2), Elementary School (3rd - 5th grade), Middle School (6th - 8th grade) and High School (9th – 12th grade),

WHEREAS, the Reconfiguration would require 4 - 7 year old children throughout New Baltimore and central and northern regions of Coxsackie to take long bus rides to EJA in the morning and back home in the afternoon, and would relocate 3rd and 4th Graders (8 - 9 years old) from EJA to Coxsackie Elementary School,

WHEREAS, the Village is a vital civic center of the Town and School District with a high population density, elementary school, library, playgrounds, churches, police department, fire department, post office, government offices, little league, senior center, American Legion Hall, municipal utilities, cemeteries, restaurants, business, the Athens Pool, active citizenry, a strong sense of community, and many other institutions and assets that together make a wonderful place to live and raise a family,

WHEREAS, the Village has always had and always needed an elementary school; always supported an elementary school financially and otherwise; the Village and Town of Athens collectively pay 35% of the School District tax levy, largely from the Village and immediate surroundings; and a K-4 EJA is an appropriate investment to serve the needs of the School District,

WHEREAS, the Village Board has considered the merits of the Reconfiguration plan and has determined that Reconfiguration would result in substantial harm to the Village of Athens, including but not limited to the quality of life of its residents and the prosperity of the Village,

WHEREAS, among its wide-ranging negative impacts, Reconfiguration will risk the safety of very young and vulnerable children lacking the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development necessary to safely participate in two long commutes every day without close parental supervision; will add a major school transition for 7-year old children causing unnecessary upheaval in their academic, emotional and social development; will impede childhood development by turning large amounts of normal activity time into counterproductive transportation time every day; will cause unnecessary hardships on young families; and will disrupt the simplicity and security of early childhood community life in the Village of Athens,

WHEREAS, the prospects of children attending school in Athens only through the 2nd grade will make Athens a less attractive place to live and raise a family, which will be very damaging to the vitality and prosperity of the Village,

WHEREAS, there is broad opposition and little, if any, support from the residence of the Village of Athens for the proposed Grade Reconfiguration, and

WHEREAS, the School District proposed a similar grade reconfiguration circa-2015, which was met with broad opposition and little, if any, support from the residence of the Village of Athens,

IT IS RESOLVED THAT, the Village Board of the Village of Athens opposes the proposed Grade Reconfiguration and directs the Village Mayor to convey this resolution to the School Board and Superintendent of Schools.

"This is an Equal Opportunity Program. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Bldg., 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410"