

NEW HIGH SCHOOL CAN RESTORE PRIDE AND REVITALIZE COMMUNITY

The DeKalb School District 428 voters have an opportunity to not only invest in their children, but also invest in the community. I say that as I sit in a state-of-the-art high school in the much smaller community of Genoa-Kingston. Five years ago the voters in Genoa-Kingston had the vision to build a new high school and reconfigured the old high school into a middle school. Little did they know that they were not simply building a new high school to accommodate growth, but they infused a sense of pride and new identity in our wonderful community. You may be saying why does the Superintendent in Genoa-Kingston care what happens in District 428. The answer is simple, I am an advocate for children and I have seen the benefit that a new school can bring not only to the students but the community as well. I have also experienced the consequences of overcrowding, split shifts and alternative schedule as an administrator for 8 years in the Plainfield School District, one of the fastest growing school districts in the State.

Every month our High School Principal and I are contacted by community groups from throughout the county, the local park district, and civic groups to host events from legislative forums and community expos to county theater productions. It is hard to express the sense of accomplishment that we have hearing our senior citizens tour the building or utilize our community fitness center and say with pride that this is their high school. This is without highlighting the hundreds of educational benefits associated with a new school. I can't emphasize enough the price of inaction is monumentally greater in the long-term than the cost today. That cost is not only financial, but also to the children of the District.

I have had the opportunity to spend time at DeKalb High School as a North Central Association External Reviewer, and to see first hand the fantastic work that the teachers and administration have done. However, their ability to meet the needs of all students and the community is significantly limited, not by a lack of willingness or creativity, but by a facility that is not capable of preparing students for today's world or the students' world that we can only begin imagine.

The communities of DeKalb, Cortland, and Malta should experience the same level of pride as those in Genoa-Kingston. I believe our communities are only as good as their ability to prepare the next generation. Best of luck!

Respectfully Submitted,

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