Leland CUSD #1
Somonaute CUSD #432
Committee of Ten
Public Meeting
December 16, 2021
Question: Why are we here?

Answer: Discuss the opportunity of reorganization by consolidation of the two districts to one single K-12 district

The Boards of both districts believe consolidating will have three outcomes:

- Stronger academics
- Stronger extracurricular activities
- Stronger financial position
We are Already Working Together

Desire to formalize our relationship

Areas of collaboration
● FFA / Agriculture: Decades
● Classes: Decades
● Transportation: Two decades
● Share Teachers: Two decades
● Sports Co-Op: Fall 2019
● Food Service: Fall 2020
Current Challenges

Leland
- 2 vacant high school teaching positions
- 1 vacant special education teaching position
- Very few students in band
- Lack of adequate courses for high achieving students

Somonauk
- 1 vacant high school teaching position
- Lack of industrial arts program
- Lack of participation in sports
- Enrollment decline
- Lack of elementary art

Universal Challenges
- Lack of all-day Pre-K program
- Small tax base largely tied to home and farm values
- Rising supply costs
- Procurement challenges
- Staffing challenges including transportation
Feasibility Study

- Completed in November 2020 by Dr. Nick Osborne and Dr. James Rosborg
- Community Presentation of findings via Zoom in November 2020
- 187 page document found on the both district’s websites
  - History
  - Enrollment
  - Curriculum
  - Transportation
  - Facilities
  - Extra-curricular
  - Finance
  - State Incentives
  - Recommendations

Findings: No significant obstacles to consolidation
Incentives: Estimated $1.1M
Recommendation: Reorganization by consolidation of the two districts
Committee of 10
Committee of Ten - Structure

Comprised of ten community members from both districts

• 5 from Somonauk
• 5 from Leland

Reflective of a diverse background

Each Committee of Ten member led a subcommittee including board members, administrators, faculty, support staff, content experts, and community members

Monthly public meetings
Committee of Ten – Objectives & Priorities

Objectives
● Review the feasibility study
● Identify questions and gaps
● Keep an open mind: “What would you do if you were building a school district from scratch?”
● Research various opportunities in the future district
● Provide recommendations for the future district
● Submit final recommendation to the Boards of Education

Priorities
● Students remain top priority
● Stronger academics
● Stronger extra-curriculars
● Stronger finances
Committee of Ten - Subcommittees

Transportation
Claire Anderson, Nick Deacon, Jan Adams, Debbie Loveless, Chris Bickel, Sharon Swander, Connie Anderson

Finance
Reed Martin, Tage Shumway, Jason Zaleski, Tom Nielsen, Tim Cain, Jay Streicher

Facilities
Norm Johnson, Dan Todd, Matt Miller, Brad Anderson, Chris Bickel, Alex Marshall, Brad Bristol, Curt Aslvig

Curriculum
Jen Kulton, Sarah Miller, Chris Bickel, Brook Grzanich, Julie Jansen, Wendy Merkel, Kim Gudmunson, Robin Gonzalez, Justin Snider, Scott Horsch, Jodi Moore

Extra-Curricular
Andy Wold, Casey Schnitz, Jason Zaleski, Brad Riskedal, Sean Serby, Elizabeth Ness, Corey Britt, Blake Johnson

Community Relations
Tom Hohmann, Sarah Miller, Chris Bland, Julie Haggard

Special Education

A sincere thank you for all the subcommittees' time and talents to help craft what the future district may look like.
Committee of 10 - Recommendations

Name: Somonauk Leland Community Unit School District

High School Mascot and Colors: Bobcats; Blue and Gold

Junior High School Mascot and Colors: Panthers; Green and Black

Facilities: Maintain open facilities in both communities
Utilize space in each facility

Transportation: Keep bus time to the current ride plus 9-10 minutes

Current Staff: Maintain all current employed staff
No workforce reduction

Board Elections: At large

Special Education: Maintain Somonauk’s in house program
Curriculum

Building Assignments
• 9-12: Somonauk High School
• 6-8: Somonauk Middle School
• PK-5: Leland Elementary / JRW Elementary
  • Exact configuration based on the “educational method” chosen

Explored optimal educational methods for PK-5
• Competency Based Learning Centers
• Hometown Elementary School
• Grade Level Learning Centers
Curriculum (PK-5)
Competency Based Learning Centers

Pros
• Student-Centered
• Students master a topic, then move to the next topic
• Consolidation is a fresh start and the ideal time to try something new

Cons
• Student motivation could be a factor
• Requires extensive professional development
• Everyone (teachers, students, parents) would need to buy in
• Curriculum would need extensive review and alignment
• Very radical
Curriculum (PK-5) Neighborhood Schools

Pros
• No bus transfer time between towns
• Less change

Cons
• Making sure all students enter middle school at the same skill level
• Harder for teachers to collaborate
• Perpetuates “Somonauck” students and “Leland” students
• Unbalanced class sizes
• Fluid boundary lines
Curriculum (PK-5)  
Grade Level Schools

**Pros**
- Teacher collaboration
- Consistent curriculum and expectations
- Students reach middle school at the same academic level
- No “Somonauk” students and “Leland” students
- Efficient use of resources (library books, textbooks, hands on learning aids)
- Even class sizes
- Enhanced student support for all students
- More efficient use of space – frees up space for other uses (possibly daycare or Pre-K programs)
- Unites the new district

**Cons**
- Bus ride
- Teachers changing buildings

**OPTION RECOMMENDED BY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**
Extra-curricular

- Larger variety of extra-curricular opportunities for students

- Focus of Clubs, Arts, and Team Sports is to build programs for the long term

- More consistency in having varsity and JV teams

- Minimal impact on IHSA class

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021-2022 Class</th>
<th>Expected Consolidated Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golf - Girls*</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf - Boys*</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer - Girls#</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer - Boys *</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
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<td>Volleyball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball - Boys</td>
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<td>Basketball - Girls*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Softball^</td>
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<tr>
<td>Track - Girls*</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track - Boys*</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Current co-op between Somonauk and Leland
#Current co-op between Somonauk and HBR
^Current co-op between Somonauk, Leland, and HBR
Why is this best for the students and community?

- Stronger course offerings
- Increased extracurricular opportunities
- Stronger teacher recruitment and retention
- State of Illinois incentive dollars available
- Minimize risk of forced consolidation - control our own destiny
- Weather future storms of staffing challenges, recessions, population changes, pandemics, or property tax base changes
- Realize benefit from economies of scale
- Financial incentives ($1.1M)
- Modest reduction in property taxes
Timeline

2018
- Both boards begin casual discussions about a potential reorganization.

Fall 2019
- Sports co-op begins.

November 2020
- Feasibility study is presented to both boards and the community.

2019
- March 2019: Both boards approve the initiation of a feasibility study.

2020
- November 2020: Feasibility study is presented to both boards and the community.

2021
- January 2021: Committee of Ten is formed.

December 2021
- Public meeting to present preliminary findings of Committee of Ten.

2022
- January 2022: Regional Office of Education holds public hearing.

June 2022
- Referendum is held.

November 2022
- Board of Education is elected.

August 2023
- Students begin attending the newly-formed district.

Pre - 2018
- Districts cooperate with FFA, transportation, and other items.

Fall 2019
- Sports co-op begins.
What happens next?

- ROE Hearing
  - January 10, 2022 at 9 AM
  - LaSalle County Board Room
  - 707 East Etna Road, Ottawa
  - Public comment (oral or written) encouraged

- Additional Public Meetings
- Referendum by Community Vote: June 28, 2022
- Board of Education Election: November 2022
- Newly Reorganized District: August 2023
Where Can I get More Information?

- Website
  https://sites.google.com/Somonauk.net/stronger-together/home
- Feasibility Study: On the web site
- Contact Information
  Leland.boe@leland1.org
  board432@Somonauk.net
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Why is this better for students?
Why are we doing this now?
Will any buildings be closed / demolished?
What guiding principles did the Committee of 10 use to guide their work?
How many teachers will be displaced?

25
I have several children and I drive them to school. How am I supposed to drop them off in Leland and Somonauk at the same time?
How will financial savings be realized?
When is the referendum?
What if the referendum passes in one district and fails in the other district?
How can I help to pass the referendum?
What’s In It For Me?

Leland
- Fewer high school teaching vacancies
- In-house special education program
- Stronger band program
- More extra-curricular activities
- AP courses
- All-day Pre-K program
- Broader tax base

Somonauk
- Fewer high school teaching vacancies
- Industrial Arts
- More students available to participate in sports
- Stable district enrollment
- More extra-curricular activities
- Elementary Art
- Middle school Foreign language
- All-day Pre-K program
- Broader tax base