**Introduction:**

The Paw Paw Board of Education has voted to put the issue of deactivating Paw Paw High School, beginning the 2019-2020 school-year and sending our students to Indian Creek at a tuition amount of $10,000 per student per year, on the November 2018 general election ballot.  This is an extremely important issue in that it will determine where our students will attend High School in the future, as well as establish the cost of sending them there.  Because this issue has the potential to impact this district for a very long time, the board has decided to publish the following pamphlet in order to answer the many questions being asked.  What follows is a factual account of the information at hand, not opinions or the agenda push by a few, either in support or opposition.  We hope you will find enough information here to allow you to make an informed rational decision on the matter.

**What is Deactivation and why is it on the ballot?**

1. **What does the wording on the ballot say?**

“Shall the Board of Education of Paw Paw Community School District No. 271, Lee and DeKalb Counties, Illinois, be authorized to deactivate the Paw Paw High School facility and to send pupils in Paw Paw High School to Indian Creek Community Unit School District No. 425?” The response is either “YES” or “NO.”

1. **What does the term “deactivate the Paw Paw High School” mean?**

To deactivate a High School is to stop providing all High School services at Paw Paw Schools and send our high school students to another district for their education.

1. **Why are we talking to Indian Creek?**

When the Board first began discussions with Indian Creek about an athletic Co-op, Indian Creek Indian Creek held open meetings to discuss with their residents the potential sport Co-op and they expressed an interest in forming that co-op and also asked Paw Paw to consider investigating a deeper relationship where students might attend Indian Creek due to the importance for students to not only play sports together, but to also attend classes together.

1. **How would the students from Paw Paw benefit?**

Students from Paw Paw would have access to numerous academic courses, activities and additional opportunities not currently offered here.

**\**Please refer to course offerings by both districts at the end of the Q & A.***

1. **If Indian Creek needs us and we need them, why is it so hard to reach an agreement?**

The feasibility study does state that both districts will benefit from the deactivation, but as Mr. Chad Willis stated at a board meeting, Indian Creek does not “need” us. They want us for various reasons, but they enjoy a robust budget surplus so they can continue without Paw Paw students if need be.

1. **If our High School Students go to Indian Creek, or Mendota, what happens to the K-8 students?**

The school board is adamant about keeping a fully functional and highly motivated K-8 school in Paw Paw.

1. **Our students are already going to Indian Creek for some classes; why don’t we just continue to do that so our kids get more classes offered?**

Indian Creek has stated they do not wish to continue class-sharing as their preference is Paw Paw students attending there on a full-time tuition basis through the deactivation process.

1. **What happens to the Sports Co-op if this does not pass?**

The sports Co-op is in effect for two years. The issue will be revisited at the end of the 2019-2020 school year and may be renewed providing both districts agree.

**Negotiations/How the Board Arrived at the Amount of $10,000 for Tuition:**

1. **What is PCTC and why does it matter?**

Per Capita Tuition Charge, or PCTC, is calculated using a State formula. That formula is generally summarized as all of the annual expenditures of a district divided by the number of students who attend. This matters, as it is the total cost for educating a child in each district. In most cases of High School Deactivation, a district is able to close a high school building and save all associated costs as they shed salaries, transportation, buildings and maintenance, support staff, etc. Determining that exact cost for Paw Paw is less obvious as many of those associated costs cannot be written off due to the need to keep the buildings open, staff and administrative salaries, etc.

1. **What is Indian Creek offering?**

The Indian Creek agreement would require an annual tuition payment of $10,000 for two years, to be negotiated at the end of the agreement. Paw Paw would also be responsible for all transportation of High School Students to Indian Creek as well as any Special Education costs above normal services.

1. **How did Indian Creek arrive at the tuition amount of $10,000?**

The determination of the tuition amount is negotiated between the 2 districts. The accepting district, Indian Creek, is allowed, by law, to charge up to 110% of their Per Capita Tuition Charge, (PCTC), which is currently listed as $12,031 and a max of $13,234.10. IC deducted their annual transportation cost as well as their bond and interest payments from that amount and rounded the figure to what is 85% if the PCTC. That amount was rounded to $10,000.

1. **If Indian Creek has $18,000,000 saved up, why are they still asking $10,000/student?**

Indian Creek feels it is unfair to their taxpayers for them to pay full PCTC for students to attend IC but ask Paw Paw to pay less. They do feel Paw Paw taxpayers should not share the burden of IC district transportation or Bonds and Interest payments and have deducted that amount (15%) from their PCTC.

**Can Paw Paw schools afford $10,000 tuition amount?**

1. **Why did the Board tell Indian Creek $8,000 was a final offer and then change it to the $10,000 Indian Creek has demanded?**

Please refer to the 5-year Financial Projections (Both using the $10,000 and without deactivation) at the end of the Q & A.

1. **I heard the costs of doing this go way up the second year. Why is that?**

The total tuition cost is based on the number of students Paw Paw sends to Indian Creek. Based on current enrollment projection for the 2019-20 school year, we would send 57 students to IC at $10,000 each for a total of $570,000. The following year, the projected enrollment is 67 students, or $670,000. Additionally, Indian Creek projects an annual rise in PCTC so Paw Paw costs would also increase based on 85% of PCTC. The $10,000 tuition amount is fixed for 2-years and then will be renegotiated.

1. **What additional costs will Indian Creek have if we send our students there?**

As per the current agreement, Indian Creek will be absorbing one teacher from Paw Paw. They will be paying that teacher’s salary and benefits based on their current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). They have also stated that they will be spending money on buildings and grounds upgrades but have not stated that those are additional costs due to the presence of Paw Paw students.

1. **What is going on with the Wind Farm and how does that affect this issue?**

The Mendota Hills Wind Farm has taken down over 60 wind turbines and will replace roughly half of those. We do not know how many will be replaced in the Paw Paw school district. Because so much is unknown about how that will affect the EAV and the resulting tax revenue, there is no way to accurately predict if the outcome will be positive or negative.

1. **I keep hearing one person say the district can’t afford $10,000 per student and others say they can. Who is right?**

Illinois school finance is very complicated and depends on taxes tied to property values as well as General State Aid. Either position is strictly a judgment call but the bottom line is that anyone other than the Superintendent and the Board doesn’t have all of the information specific to Paw Paw available to make a valid argument one way or the other.

1. **If our district has been in deficit spending for a long time, and just now is starting to have surplus money, why are we willing to go back in debt?**

The board is not willing to go back in debt. However, at this time they feel the final decision must be made by the voters after they are given as much information as possible in order to make an informed decision.

1. **What happens to the tuition cost once the current deal ends?**

The tuition cost for Paw Paw students will be renegotiated at the end of the agreement. The process would follow the same criteria as this time, with Indian Creek legally allowed to charge up to 110% of the PCTC at the time of the negotiations. Indian Creek projects an annual rise in PCTC so Paw Paw costs could also increase based on 85% of PCTC.

1. **Indian Creek says they will spend our money on air-conditioning, a new track, and other upgrades to their facilities. Weren’t they going to do those anyway? If so, isn’t our money really just going toward their already inflated savings?**

The short answer is “yes.” As we understand their plan for facilities improvements, these will happen no matter if our students attend there or not. We have been told the funds Paw Paw pays will be used to make those improvements happen at a faster pace.

1. **Why is our tax money being spent to improve Indian Creek schools when our buildings need work done?**

Our buildings and grounds can still be improved. Of course, the money the district has available to do those improvements will depend on the use of tax dollars we currently have minus what we pay for tuition to Indian Creek as there is no plan for additional taxes in any way.

1. **Why can’t Paw Paw take more time to consider both offers?**

Indian Creek Superintendent Chad Willis, informed the Paw Paw Board that the Board of Education at Indian Creek was not interested in discussing the issue beyond the November ballot and was highly unlikely to entertain the idea of exploring the issue longer and more in depth with the possibility of placing the referendum on the April 2019 Ballot.

**If referendum passes:**

1. **If this does pass, won’t our transportation costs actually increase?**

Yes, the district will need to transport all High School students from Paw Paw to Indian Creek. Although it is difficult to say what that might mean financially as it may be offset by the lack of having to transport athletes to practices as we would still need to do as part of the athletic Co-op is the referendum should fail.

1. **How will this affect my taxes?**

This will not affect your taxes. The money paid for tuition to another district comes directly from the money already collected for educating children here at Paw Paw.

1. **How will this affect the teachers and staff here at Paw Paw?**

This decision should not affect any K-5 teachers. Indian Creek has committed to absorbing one High School teacher so the board will determine what classes 6-8 are necessary and/or they desire to implement in order to look at the qualifications and seniority of the remaining teachers to determine which staff they need to retain.

**If Referendum does not pass:**

1. **What happens if this does not pass?**

If this referendum would not pass, there are three options the board might consider. 1. Request to reenter negotiations with Indian Creek to discuss a lower tuition rate. 2. Leave the district intact as it currently operates as K-12. 3. Open discussions with other neighboring districts to determine additional options.

1. **If this is so good for us, why don’t we just go ahead and consolidate now?**

The school board has listened to the public, who has resoundingly called for keeping a school open in Paw Paw. Keeping K-8 students will allow the community to make decisions on how those students are prepared for High School, no matter where they attend.

1. **If sending our students to Indian Creek doesn’t pass, will our students automatically go to Mendota?**

No. If the referendum fails to pass, the board will decide which direction to go, which could include discussions with Mendota., as well as other districts.

1. **Why has the board not talked to Mendota?**

When this process began, the board made a commitment to Indian Creek to work toward an agreement with them. They felt including Mendota in the discussion was breaking the agreement and that it might inhibit negotiations.

1. **What is Mendota offering?**

Mendota made an unsolicited formal offer to the board on September 19, 2018. They would charge our students $6,000 annual tuition for two years and then place a 3% cap on any annual increase thereafter. They would also absorb transportation for the south half of Paw Paw district as well as to and from Mendota from Paw Paw. Additionally, they have said they will absorb all Special education expenses.

1. **Why hasn’t the board done more to educate the town about the issue?**

The board has discussed this plan during regular meetings since late last year (2017). Additionally, the board has held numerous special board meetings to discuss the issues with two of those specifically scheduled to inform the public about the process and get their input/feedback. More meeting(s) are planned prior to the vote on November 6, 2018.

**Summary:**

There is a great deal of information to digest about the issue above and the board understands they are unable to fully address all questions the community might have.  What they have been able to do is develop answers to questions, which were considered those most commonly asked.  However, because more questions may arise between now and voting on this issue actually take place, the board has also decided to hold at least one more informational meeting to respond to those questions and concerns.  Please monitor both the school webpage and Facebook page for information concerning any additional meetings.

**For answers to additional questions, please email:**

stanad@2paws.net

**Next Special Informational Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 in High School Gym.**

**Link to Paw Paw/Indian Creek Deactivation Study:**

 **Go to:** [**http://www.2paws.net/**](http://www.2paws.net/) **and click on the link under Deactivation Study to download the entire study in Microsoft Word format**

**Current High School Courses offered at each High School**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Paw Paw**  | **Indian Creek** |
| **English** | **English** |
| English 1-4 | English 1-4 |
| Kish College English | AP English Literature |
|  | Yearbook 1-3 |
|  | Film Analysis |
|  | Speech Communications |
|  | Theater 1-3 |
|  | Creative Writing 1-2 |
| **Math** | **Math** |
| Business Math | Pre-Algebra |
| Algebra 1-2 | Algebra 1-2 |
| Geometry | Geometry |
| Trigonometry (Kish) | Application of Mathematics |
| College Algebra (Kish) | Computer Programming |
| Calculus (Kish) | Pre-Calculus/Calculus/AP Calculus |
| **Science** | **Science** |
| Earth Science | General Science |
| Chemistry | Biology and Advanced Biology |
| Physics | Physics |
| Biology 1-2 | Physical Science |
|  | Zoology |
|  | Botany |
|  | Human Physiology |
| **Social Studies** | **Social Studies** |
| Geography | World Geography |
| History Topics | World History 1-2 |
| Civics/Consumer Education | U.S. History |
| American History (Kish) | Psychology |
|  | Modern America |
|  | Governmental Systems |
| **Business Education** | **Business Education** |
| Business Concepts | Introduction to Business |
| Word Processing (Kish) | Keyboarding/Formatting |
| Computer Literacy | Word Processing/Advanced Word Proc |
|  | ICHS Tech Academy |
|  | Computer Graphic Design |
|  | Informational Processing |
|  | Accounting 1-2 |
|  | Web Design |
| **Art** | **Art** |
| Art | Art 1-4 |
|  | Ceramics |
|  | Painting 1-2 |
| **Music** | **Music** |
| Music Appreciation | Concert Band and Independent Band |
| Choir | Choir |
| Band | Independent Choir |
| **Foreign Language** | **Foreign Language** |
|  | Spanish 1-4 |
| **Agriculture** | **Agriculture** |
| Basic Agriculture | Introduction to Agricultural Industry |
|  | Basic Agricultural Mechanics and Advanced Mech |
|  | Horticulture - Floral Design and Landscape Design |
|  | Agriculture Construction |
|  | Agriculture Sales |
|  | Agricultural Biotechnology |
|  | Af Communication and Leadership |
|  | Vet Technology |
|  | Independent Study Ag |
|  | Supervised Ag Experience 1-2 |
| **Physical Education**  | **Physical Education**  |
| P.E. 1-4 | P.E. 1-4 |
| Driver’s Education | Driver’s Education |
| **Vocational Education** | **Vocational Education** |
| N/A | Career Internship |
|  | Career Internship Lab |
| **Industrial Arts** | **Industrial Arts** |
| N/A | Introduction to Industrial Technology |
|  | Introduction to Woods Technology |
|  | Introduction to Building Trades |
|  | Millwork and Cabinetry |
| **Industrial Arts** | **Industrial Arts** |
| **Family and Consumer Science** | **Family and Consumer Science** |
| N/A | Foods 1-4 |
|  | Clothing 1-4 |
|  | Parenting |
|  | Adult Living |
|  | Living Environments |
|  | Resource Management |
| **Library Science** | **Library Science** |
| N/A | Library Science |
| **Health Education** | **Health Education** |
| N/A | First Aid/CPR |
|  | Health Education |