

Angela Lavalley
Concerned Parent/Community Member
967-0447
Please have Pamela Munro read on my behalf

(I send with this my apologies that I cannot be in attendance, let alone read this in public, as I am very emotional about this matter. I would ask permission that the chair of school council, Pamela Munro please read this on my behalf.)

My name is Angela Lavalley. I am the mother of a 4-year-old child who attends Warren Central Public School. First off, I would like to apologize for not being able to attend this final meeting and read my letter for myself. It makes me sick to my stomach and brings me to tears, every time I hear our school may be closed.

I attended this school in the 80's and I consider myself an intelligent individual! My daughter started school in September. Had she started anywhere else, I do not believe she would have gotten the education she has at Warren Central Public School. With regards to a statement made at the last meeting..."My child would get a better education at Markstay Public School?! How do you figure? Do you think a classroom of 20 students plus, gets a better education than a classroom with less? I beg you to sit down with my child to see what she has learnt at Warren in such a short period of time(2 days a week). And who has taught her all she knows? Could it be the lady who spent years of her life, putting herself through school so she could get an education to teach our children? We don't need any special programs; we need teachers with heart who care? (That comment at the last meeting angered me).

And why was nothing mentioned about our busing situation? If our school is to close and I choose to send my child to Sturgeon Falls=yes to Sturgeon because she has the right to get the BEST education (wherever that may be!) She will be on a bus filled with high school students for over 2 hours each day! Does that make sense at 5 years old? Or if I send her to Markstay for the "better educational program"...how many times will she have to transfer buses? (Some do this up to 8 times!) At 5 years old, she should not have to do this once! Whatever way I choose to send her, she will be traveling on Hwy.17, one of the worst highways!

I guess my child's life rests in your hands-If you make the decision to close her school, the only other options are to home school her or to send her to a school where we don't speak the language. Whoever makes the final decision, feel free to come by and help me educate my daughter.

Now another thing! I need a question answered. I am still not sure as to what the reason is for the closure of our school. Is it the work that needs to be done? Well why wasn't anything fixed before it got too costly and started falling apart! Or is it the attendance? Why did you take away the 7 and 8's and then 4, 5, 6 and then change the boundaries? All poor choices that have led to this demise. And of course people chose an alternative to sending their kids to Warren with all of the negative talk and the class reductions over

the years! Leave our school open! Bring back the 4,5,6; change the boundary lines and introduce French immersion and then see if we are the school with enrollment problems. For the record, we have 16 students at our school. My child should count as a whole when she does not. Sixteen may not sound like many, but when it only goes up to Grade 3 and the closure of our school has been stamped into the minds of everyone what do you expect. I have people calling me from Sudbury and area, saying, "I heard Abbi's school is closing!" If I'm in the checkout line at Wal-Mart and we get asked what grade she is in and where she goes to school, they say, "I hear they are closing that school. (I thought this was a review, not a closure?!)" So if that is the case, and you've had your minds made up all this time, why put us through all of the meetings, the pleas, and the heartbreaks for nothing!

If you feel the need to close our school, why not make sure we have a back up plan – and what I mean by that is our recommendation to lease the space at St.Thomas. This would be a better option for our community as a whole. The students already ride the bus together and they know each other and play together on weekends. The students would not have the problem; perhaps we need to be more open-minded.

It really pains me (and anyone that know me, knows this brings me to tears) to even think that my child's future education rests in the hands of complete strangers, people who never sat in on one of our classes; a Christmas concert; or went and sat on the bus and took the ride that one boy has to travel everyday! Our school is a family with a lot of heart – I urge you, don't break it!

One last thing, before you make your final decision, I leave you with this challenge. Imagine you are between the ages of 4 and 10. I invite you to come to my house and take the two-minute bus ride with my daughter to Warren. The following day, take the bus from my house into Sturgeon Falls with the high school students and then, take the bus into Markstay. Be prepared for the transfers and hopefully there won't be a snowstorm those days. The Administration Council believes the "better education" outweighs the safety of my daughter. Think of your children; your grandchildren; and please think of mine!

If you won't take this challenge, hopefully someone out there will, so all of the public can be informed as to what will happen to our children if you close Warren Central Public School.

Thank you,

Angela Lavallee