

House Education Committee
On
House Bill 2504
submitted by
Dr. Penny Hargrove, Superintendent, Hiawatha Schools USD #415, a member
of Schools for Quality Education

February 1, 2016

Chairman Highland and committee members. As you review House Bill 2504, we ask you to consider the following reasoning for opposing this bill.

We believe this bill would be harmful to our students and communities for the following reasons:

- Restrict local control
- Abolish the local Board of Education leadership ability to customize educational opportunities driven by the unique needs of the different communities.
- Force districts to request large bond projects in order to provide suitable facilities that are centralize in the county and have the capacity to house students and staff collectively.
- Reduce employment opportunities for rural communities.
- Reduce rural population in rural communities similar to what happened in the 1960s with the last consolidation act.
- Increase transportation costs and time students spend on buses.
- Lower community pride and participation with school activities and events.

On Friday, I had the pleasure of watching our girls' basketball team play South Brown County, the other district within our county. The pride and passion both communities displayed were energizing and empowering to both teams. The communities are very different and each provides just what their students need to become successful young adults. This bill would bring two very different districts together and force them to compromise tradition and quality. We ask this bill not move out of committee for our students and communities sake.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Dr. Penny Hargrove