



2801 York Road
Oak Brook, Illinois 60523-2399

Board of Education and
Administrative Center
2801 York Road
Telephone: 630-573-2887
FAX: 630-573-5374

Butler Junior High School
2801 York Road
Telephone: 630-573-2760
FAX: 630-573-5374

Brook Forest School
60 Regent Drive
Telephone: 630-325-6888
FAX: 630-325-8452

Sandra L. Martin, Ed.D.
Superintendent

www.Butler53.com

May 17, 2010

Letter to Our School Community

Butler School District 53's Board of Education and administration have been aware for several years that a variety of Oak Brook residents living in a number of different neighborhoods, but currently not living within the boundaries of Butler School District desire to annex into our school district and detach from their present districts. The complex annexation/detachment process is described in detail in the *Illinois School Code, Article 7*. I will outline some of the parameters of the process here as well as explain why the District 53 Board of Education has remained neutral in these annexation issues.

Interest in annexing into Butler 53 was kindled by a letter to the editor of *The Doings* on December 2007, written by former board member, Dr. Stanley Pruss. At the time, Dr. Pruss was aware that neighboring Hinsdale District 181 was experiencing overcrowding in their middle schools and was also cognizant that Butler 53 was experiencing a downturn in enrollment. Acting as a private citizen and without endorsement from the District 53 board of education at the time, Dr. Pruss issued an invitation to Oak Brook residents who lived within the boundaries of District 181 to consider initiating an annexation process. As both Hinsdale 181 and Butler 53 share the same high school district, such a proposal would have only affected the elementary districts.

This letter to the editor inspired many Oak Brook homeowners who resided outside the school district boundaries to inquire about how they could become part of District 53. In addition to those residents immediately south of the school district boundaries, residents on the west and north sides of Oak Brook also have contacted our school district at various times to learn more about the process. Individuals and groups seeking information were directed to resources from the Illinois State Board of Education and the DuPage Regional Office of Education.

The determination whether to allow residents to annex into another school district rests solely with the Regional Board of School Trustees, an entity that is separate from school districts. Such determinations are made after a Committee of Ten has been formed, signatures from registered voters in the affected area collected, research on the impact on both affected school districts conducted, appropriate petitions filed, notice of a public hearing announced, and the hearing conducted. Additional steps are typically necessary.

According to the Illinois State Board of Education brochure on school district detachment/annexation, Regional Board of School Trustee approval of a detachment/annexation is based on the following factors:

- School needs and conditions of the territory in the area within and adjacent thereto
- The ability of districts affected to meet the standards of recognition as prescribed by the State Board of Education
- The division of funds and assets which will result from the change of boundaries
- Whether such a change is to the best interests of the schools of the area and the educational welfare of the pupils [sic]

Decisions of the Regional Board of School Trustees may be appealed. The decision of the Regional Board of School Trustees is deemed an “administrative decision” as defined in the Code of Civil Procedure. Any resident who appears at the hearing or any petitioner or board of education of any district affected may file a complaint for judicial review within 35 days after receiving the decision.

The complete brochure can be found at: <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/pdf/Detach.pdf>

While Butler’s Board of Education has been kept informed about the multiple inquiries, the Board has refrained from taking a position relative to a neighborhood’s desire to join the district. As superintendent of Butler 53, I have provided information to petitioners and consistently conveyed the message that only the Board of Education has the authority to lend its support. In addition, I have stated that the Board could not entertain the petition until after a comprehensive analysis was completed by the petitioners and presented to the Board showing specific data relative to potential enrollment and financial impact on all school districts involved. As this process requires following the *Illinois School Code* without deviation, I advise all petitioners to seek legal counsel if they are determined to begin the process. Typically, the process takes many years and may ultimately be resolved through the court system. To date, no official data has been given to our Board and as such, the Board has made no public statements regarding its support or lack of support for any neighborhood or individual homeowners seeking to annex into Butler 53. When and if the Board is ever presented with data, the Board will consider first and foremost the impact such annexation may have on the present and future students of Butler District 53.

Please know that the Board of Education and the administration consider providing the finest education possible for each of our students our most abiding public trust. Be assured that this vision is uppermost in our minds as we navigate the complex issues that face our district, including potential annexation.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

My very best regards,

Sandra L. Martin

Sandra L. Martin, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools