



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ASHLAND
— EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION —

School District of Ashland

MERGER SURVEY REPORT
February 2019

Prepared by



INTRODUCTION

The School District of Ashland is considering merging Lake Superior Primary and Lake Superior Intermediate schools for potential cost savings to the District. The schools have been in the same building since 1991. Despite their co-location, the schools have operated largely independent of one another. They do share some staff, including physical education, music and art teachers, along with special education teachers and aides, library staff and custodial personnel.

The School Board began a process to consider the possibility of combining Lake Superior Primary School and Lake Superior Intermediate School starting in the 2019-20 school year. The first step was to survey community members for their input. The survey was open from February 7 to February 17, 2019.

The survey received a total of 158 completed responses. It is worth noting that, for most of the survey questions, there was a high level of clarity and consistency in terms of the preferences expressed by survey takers. To that end, it is unlikely that more responses would have significantly changed the survey's results.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered using the Donovan Group's survey engine. Efforts were made to ensure that all eligible respondents had the opportunity to take the survey, but that no respondents took it multiple times. In accordance with best practices in online research and to protect the security of the survey, internet protocol (IP) addresses were logged and each survey was time-stamped.

To date, there is no reason to believe anyone has taken the survey more than once or that anyone from outside the district has taken the survey.

To encourage residents to take the survey, the school district emailed all district families with a link to the survey on the district website.

Finally, it is worth noting that, by design, this data is not based on a scientific sample. As such, it should be treated as qualitative data that is similar to data from a large number of focus groups. Because we used a convenience sample, it would be methodologically inappropriate to carry out a regression analysis or attempt to calculate error.

SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 158 respondents completed the survey. To complete the survey, respondents must have clicked "submit" at the end of the survey and answered all the required questions.

Below are the questions and their corresponding responses. Please note that the open-response questions were combined and presented in their entirety and unedited, except for redacting identifying information.

What is your age?

18 or under	0.63%
19-25	1.27%
26-34	15.19%
35-44	48.10%
45-54	25.95%
55-64	8.23%
65 and over	0.63%

Where do you reside?

City of Ashland	61.39%
Town of Eileen	6.33%
Town of Gingles	6.96%
Town of Kelly	1.90%
Town of Keystone	1.90%
Town of Marengo	3.80%
Town of Pilsen	1.90%
Town of Sanborn	5.06%
Town of White River	3.80%
Other	6.96%

How long have you lived in the school district?*

Less than 2 years	6.33%
Between 2 and 5 years	8.23%
Between 5 and 10 years	9.49%
Between 10 and 20 years	27.22%
Between 20 and 30 years	21.52%
More than 30 years	27.22%

Please check all of the following that apply to you.*

I have school-aged children	28.04%
I have preschool-aged children	6.09%
I have children who currently attend or have attended the School District of Ashland	26.52%
I have children who graduated from or previously attended a School District of Ashland school	9.13%
I have/have had children who are or were open-enrolled to another school district	1.74%
I have grandchildren who currently attend or have attended the	

School District of Ashland	1.52%
I have attended the School District of Ashland	12.83%
I am a community member who has never had children attend the School District of Ashland	0.43%
I am currently a student at the School District of Ashland	0.43%
I am currently a member of the Lake Superior Primary staff	4.13%
I am currently a member of the Lake Superior Intermediate staff	6.09%
I am currently employed by the Ashland School District, but I do not work as a member of the LSP or LSI staff	2.39%
Other	0.65%

Based on what you know about the possibility of merging Lake Superior Primary and Lake Superior Intermediate, what advice would you give to board members as they consider this merger?

The schools should be merged for the 2019-20 school year.	57.32%
The schools should not be merged for the 2019-20 school year.	8.28%
I do not have an opinion on this topic.	18.47%
Other:	15.92%

Please note: Respondents who answered "other" for this question were provided with an open response area to provide additional information. Most chose not to provide a response. Those who did, in large part, noted a variation of "unsure."

Please explain why you answered the question above as you did. All comments will be provided to the School Board.

What additional information would you like to provide the School Board as it considers this issue?

- *In 1990 when the school opened, the decision by the Ashland voters were to have two schools under one roof. The purpose was to cut operating costs of the "neighborhood" schools. How does this impact the library system at LSP and LSI as far as being on the same format for checking books out? For Speech and Title I, will separate needs assessments need to be done for K-2 and 3-5? I believe all avenues should be examined and thought carefully and thoroughly. Is this merger only because of a cost savings of computer programs - purchasing one site license rather than two? What is the rationale for making this change?*
- *The administration told us this was not a done deal. But before the survey was even closed the word came from district office that this was a done deal. If that was the case then instead of pretending like they cared, they should have been honest. Once again we have been lied to by administration. There is no reason to trust any administrator that is in the Ashland School District.*
- *It,Ãs not clear on the savings of the school and who it effects.*
- *If this should save the district dollars in a variety of licensings etc..... that is great! If this means the school as a whole will have 2 cooks in each pot, I feel uneasy.*
- *The referendum was passed because the promise was made that the schools would remain separate. School staff is shared, which helps with cost. Along with staff being shared with the Charter school, which saves monies even though Charter schools are not to be a part of a*

public school & to be totally separate from the public school. This means their own staff & not sharing. Although this is not how most Charter schools work, as we know. Maybe administration monies could be looked at for areas to save. Hind sight, but maybe a huge field house that has to be rented out to the people who are already paying higher taxes because of it being built somehow doesn't show much foresight. Or, people just don't care who were a part of this decision.

- *Any way to save some \$ for the district without hurting the children's education I am in favor of.*
- *I don't see the need. If there was significant dollar savings why don't the administration tell us what that savings is. The needs K-2 and 3-5 are very different. I don't understand the still keeping 2 principals if we are one school. There is a new principal and superintendent who have not been here for more than 8 months. The fact that they want to change the schools and barely know anything about the school, much less making big changes already. This is the most disturbing to me. Most of the teachers and staff will be here until they retire. The 3-5 principal and superintendent will maybe be here 5 years max. They are not invested like those of us who have made our lives here. But yet they are driving this big change.*
- *Answered above. As well as the services to children, no staff should lose a position because of the merger.*
- *If it saves money and allows us to maintain small classes I am in favor.*
- *We need to know the cost savings. We have been told we will save money on computer program site licenses & Skyward reports will be easier to run. All students are in Skyward already so that won't be a cost savings. Teachers now know who their supervising principal is. If we merge will employees have two supervisors? Who will be accountable for teacher evaluations and if we have a concern which principal do we contact? We now have speech, special education and Title 1 teachers for each school to meet our student needs. If we merge will we eliminate some positions or not have equal coverage for some grade levels? Because we now have one office do we really need to be one school? Maybe that should have been thought of before we remodeled and eliminated the separate offices in each school. Teachers were not in favor of this referendum remodel. It was never on the original plans. I think we could have made offices in each school more secure in many different ways even by keeping our separate offices. We feel removed and have little contact with our office staff and principals.*
- *The community agreed 27 years ago to build a new school and close our 3 neighborhood schools. The agreement was that we would build two schools connected with gyms to save money because gyms are costly. That referendum was passed with this agreement. I also believe that discipline would look different for Pre K-2 students than 3-5 students. LSI teachers spent a lot of time on a committee to develop discipline guidelines for our 3-5 students. I really think everyone needs to know how much money will be saved by doing this and take some time to see what other barriers or benefits this will have. Will we separate into 2 schools again if we have declining enrollment or poor report cards? A lot of questions and concerns considering we found out about this 3 weeks ago. Thank you for surveying the teachers even though it was an afterthought and we had less than 24 hours to respond to the survey. My children went to the school when it was K-2 and 3-5 and I feel they got a good education at the 2 schools. Now that we have added PreK I feel we have 4 sections of grades at LSP and 3 sections of grades at LSI so we are more comparable to the size of MVS, AMS, and AHS. If we merge that is going to a lot of students in one school especially if later we are reduced to one principal.*
- *I would like to see a study done to clearly show the benefits and drawbacks of one large school. The school was designed to be 2 schools within one school. I feel this merger is moving too quickly without adequate study and without staff input. Please seek staff input. Study carefully before making decisions.*

- *Not enough information has been given out. What programs/positions will be or might possibly be cut? (Staff) It's been stated that there will be significant savings. However, that's as far as the explanation goes. Savings from what? Staff position?*
- *It makes financial sense to share licensure of all faculty members, support staff, and technology contracts, as one entity. The school is large enough that it probably needs 2 principals, as we currently have.*
- *As a staff member that works with students K-6 it would make things clearer if we were all one school. That would allow for all rules/decisions to be the same across all levels. I would like to know how the principal jobs would be divided. Would they stay the same or would their time and resources be split. I believe their time and resources should be split. Why would both need to attend the same meeting, causing our school to be left without support?
I think if funding for title stays the same it would be good for the school. Money could be saved when purchasing intervention/enrichment sites.*
- *It's ridiculous that people are getting upset about the merging. It should happen and there's no need to be upset about this possibility.*
- *I believe that each wing 1-5 should be setup as a pod school... the teachers still can work at grade level..curriculum but now we can work to go deeper and understand the scaffolding of our students developmental stages and differentiate our curriculum accordingly When we had neighborhood schools it was a tight community We knew our kids There has NEVER been any numbers of cost savings given to anyone who is interested in this matter.*
- *It would be the best to work together even more and save some money in areas that usually have to be separate. This is absolutely a farce that a few people are living with fear ,Áúwhat if this or that happens.,Áù To be honest we,Áöve worked as ,Áúone,Áù school many times in the past already. This should absolutely happen. Thank you!!*
- *I am unsure how I feel about this. I am only concerned that if we do merge the schools, I do not want this to affect future staffing of Administration and teachers. By that I mean I would hope as was told to us, we will keep two principals (One for K-2 and one for 3-5). I am for the merger if we are actually going to save money. However, I do not feel that we have been shown very factual information about how much money the school/district will actually be saving. It is my hope that moving forward, our school board keeps in mind the benefits of smaller class sizes. Smaller class sizes can be beneficial if dynamics of students are challenging. A classroom of 25 students who are well behaved and at grade level academically, may be manageable and successful but what if a large number of those students have IEP's, behavioral/social/emotional hardships and also academic struggles. When making decisions of if to hire a new teacher to replace a retiring teacher, I want to be sure that the district and school board are looking at our student population and what is best for the students. Some of our data has even shown that smaller class sizes have done better on testing. I feel the merger is going to be saving money in some ways, but keeping staff will only help improve our trauma sensitive school.*
- *I do not feel that enough concrete information has been provided to clearly outline the implications and cost savings for this merger. What would the total cost savings be? Does that make it worth it? How will it effect operations? What implications does this have on staffing? Can the name be Ashland Elementary School instead of Lake Superior Elementary, as that is the name of a school in Superior?*
- *As always with changes we need to make sure that there is real value to the changes. We claim to want to do what is best for our students, as we should, but then we make cuts to staff and resources. We are a trauma sensitive school and to be that way takes people and we shouldn't just have the value of staff reduced to a bottom line dollar and cents decision.*
- *It seems like there might be more to the merger then what we are told. We have not been told any numbers. Will it affect any jobs and how much money are we saving. Will schedules and such stay the same.*

- *I would like to know all the cost saving that this merger will have. Can we also think about having the school named something that does not conflict with another school district that is 50 miles away. If this merger proves to not be cost efficient, would it go back to 2 separate schools??*
- *When the school board or administration is looking for ways to cut the budget and/or be cost efficient, we need to make sure that the needs of the students are being met. We have a very high-need population of students and we want to be a trauma sensitive school, but cutting staff, such as teachers, does not help this happen. We talk about improving test scores, but having higher number of students per classroom does not help this. Has a school district we need to practice what we preach. Our students need more staff, not less. There are statistics proving that lower class numbers increase student learning and help students make connections with staff. The LSI staff members are concerned about a 4th grade teacher that is retiring not being replaced, leaving the 4th grade section at 4 teachers, not 5. This means higher number of students per class.*
- *I don't understand how the change will substantially affect anything while preserving staff positions the way they are.*
- *No one presented on how much it will be saving the district by doing this. I think there needs to be a some idea of the cost savings it will bring.
I think it makes more sense to reduce the number separate schools in one building. If it reduces operating expenses and allows for more funds directed to direct support of our students, I am all for it.*
- *Staff is stretched too thin. We need to free up some of the budget to have the staff needed to meet the needs of our kiddos, especially the social, emotional, and mental health needs.*
- *I am concerned about title I services being effected negatively. I am concerned about the teachers have two principals for one school (or maybe the principal positions would stay the same?) If the merger does not affect staffing in any way, or only in a positive way, I think the merger would be OK. We need to maintain our small class sizes as the needs of students are very great in our district.*
- *If the merger is going to make it easier to work smart, then let's do it. I would like to propose that the school use the fiscal savings from the merger (I understand it, not to be a huge fiscal savings) to help support students within our 4K-5 school. One of my suggestions would be to increase teacher staffing and reduce the student to teacher ratio to meet the demands of our children who have undergone trauma. 1:22 may be feasible in a school with low socio economic needs and low trauma needs, but we have both and have recognized by the state as having such.*
- *Change the name. Lake Superior elementary already exists in superior. When there are school closings it says Lake Superior Elementary and my kids always think we're closed. Didn't this also cause a problem last year when the bouncy houses for field day were delivered to dauperuor instead of Ashland because of a snafu with the names?*
- *Given the very little info I know about this, if basically the only change is a cost savings that would result from only needing one subscription to various services, rather than two, then it only makes sense to combine schools. If however, ANY of this will negatively impact our students in any way, then this information needs to be laid out for parents to consider. To be honest, I didn't really even realize that LSP and LSI were considered two separate schools on paper. All consequences, both positive and negative, that the merger could have both right away and long term. Why were the schools set up separately to begin with?
staff transitions for students will be easier for them to understand and not feel like they can't talk to staff from previous grades*
- *Save money*
- *If the schools basically stay as they are except for the name, and this will save money, it makes sense to merge.*

- Save on costs
- The cost saving benefits seem to vastly outweigh any negatives to the merger.
- As far as I know, the merger would save money and I don't really see a purpose of having the opposite sides of the school separate. I do feel very strongly that we continue to need two principals and if merging would lead to one principal in the future, then I am against merging. There is more work in a day than our current principals can accomplish when they help meet the needs of our students as well as the office work that they do.
- it would save the district money
- Shared staff as well as one "school" allow for shared resources and reduced cost on educational materials through DPI
- I believe if it will be in the best interest of students, keeping safety and security in mind, then it would be a fair step to take.
- If merged will there be one Administrator overseeing the school as a whole, one principal? Will there be more support staff to help with behavior issues and helping get kids AND teachers the support they need? We could save more money by merging the Marengo Valley school too! There are kids that travel from farther in Bad River all the way to town and have less support in their home lives that could benefit just as much from a school catered to them. I'm sure a school located on the reservation and staffed by school district employees could be award winning too!
- I am ok with the schools being merged for cost savings, I just hope that it does not affect the students and teachers with higher class sizes. this would not be beneficial in any way Unfortunately, I feel like we are in this cost saving situation because the building of the field house. Obviously, it is an amazing thing to have for our students/community, but I worried that the district may have issues down the road....and here we are. I don't see any disadvantage of having the schools merged. Perhaps I am not fully understanding of what all may not be available to the kids if they merge? But if it saves the school district money and they will have all the same opportunities and benefits they currently have, why not?
- I went to school at a much smaller school but we had K-6th in one section of the school and it worked well. I think that as long as there is plenty of supervision to maintain safety with the numbers and the students aren't missing out on curriculum; Safety, Happiness, Education - as long as these aren't compromised - I don't see an issue.
- What kind of money would be saved by doing this and what would the money that is saved be used for? What staff is impacted? etc.
- With the administrative cost savings of merging the schools, you can use some of the excess monies to increase your staff. For example, the kindergarten could use floating aides between the classrooms
- Why? I really do not see money saved from doing this! The school already got the central office that was not what the public wanted. No matter what the survey says, decisions will still be made.
- Instead of making office jobs easier, and worrying about making principals job easier, can we look at teachers. You are not replacing a 4th grade teacher which will result in high numbers again from 3rd to 4th. You are not replacing a 1st grade position which will result in our youngest kids not getting the best. You are letting classes double up with sometimes 30-40 in a classroom when subs are unavailable, You are not taking care of your teachers. I do not know enough on it to say one is better than the other, but I personally, don't think either way would be a bad thing. I have not had any bad experiences with my children and the school district.

- *The schools already share several teachers and rooms. The office is already combined so the building might as well be one.*
- *The age groups should remain separate.*
- *If it saves money for the district, then the sooner the better.*
- *Money needs to be saved and this will save money I also think staff should be reduced where there are duplications - one principal, one nurse, etc.*
- *I appreciate the openness and willingness to seek feedback from the community, but ultimately I am not immersed enough in this issue to understand the costs and benefits of combining these schools. I can't possibly offer an informed opinion without more information and my opinion at this point would only be on whether I like the idea or not, not whether it makes the most sense for our kids or our pocketbooks. School district administration and board members are hired or elected by us to research these issues and make what they feel are the best decisions for our kids. I trust your judgment. Do what is best for our kids first and pocketbooks second.*
- *Aren't they already one school? I mean I already refer to it as Lake Superior Elementary s*
- *I don't see what the difference would be. Plus there is only one main office now so...*
- *I don't know what kind of benefits AND disadvantages there would be. I don't have enough info.*
- *No cuts in staff!!*
- *When I moved here and began to learn about the school district, I always wondered why Lake Superior wasted so much money being separated while in the same school working with a range of k-5 children. What a waste of tax payers money to be separate, but my opinion was not important back then.*
- *Be focused on the future, please. Future oriented is progress!*
- *I believe we need to know the exact cost savings, and where this money would go to benefit the school.*
- *They have all been in the same school together, merging them does not seem like a big deal. My children are now graduated or attending high school.*
- *Cost savings and the possibility for an even more cohesive/connected staff*
- *I think that it will be a good thing to merge. Saves on expenses and also is good for the kids.*
- *The cost savings to the district in not duplication services/subscriptions The resulting savings should be used to at a minimum keep teaching positions fully funded at current levels, if not increased (additional staff as necessary)*
- *I answered with considerations for merging the two schools. I did so with the assumptions that the merger would be done to create efficiencies and cost savings, without detrimentally effecting the quality of education and support of staff.*
- *I think it is a good idea to merge for cost savings. I am worried about what that means for Title I teachers and support though. Also, will it be set up to keep the 2 principals into the future because if it is planned to go to 1 eventually that would be too many students and staff to have under 1 principal.*
- *I would like to see this transition as soon as possible, as long as the school can reroute the money saved to enhance other programs.*
- *Not sure how the merger would affect staff I think knowing about staff changes would be helpful.*
- *The merger will become necessary due to the referendum project in a declining enrollment district. Unfortunately this will not be the last cost-savings that will be necessary as funding services will decrease while the servicing of debt remains the same. If the merger of the two schools results in smaller class sizes or less opportunities for students it should not proceed.*
- *School Board is going to do what they want to do. There's community surveys, but that's for appearances, like they listen to parents, but really, they just do what they want. It's why we*

stupidly have a fall & spring break in the same year & then neither the next, instead of switching, or just having both every year (what families have asked for years).

- *I went to an elementary school that was k-6 and I think it was a successful model.*
- *We need to worry about keeping class sizes lower instead of how to make non teachers jobs easier. My student is being taught by a teacher. I am more worried about making her/his job easier with lower numbers (18-20) instead of 24-25!!!, instead of making our secretaries, which are 2 of them who impact my students learning in no way, easier. More teachers, keeping teachers, less worrying about what will make the office run better. I would like you to keep good staff, because our district isn't doing a great job of this. I know my wife of 18+ years is ready to leave. Maybe you should hear from the people who are in the trenches rather than the people who are making the decisions. People who have invested in the children's future rather than the bottom line may be the one to hear from rather than the ones blowing smoke! Saving money is great. Let,Ãs look at business mangager who makes more than teachers, staff, or even close to person who is suppose to be in charge. While you cut teachers in the lowest grades where kids will be 25+ kids ,Ãç,ôÃÖΓè Decisions are being made without the school board knowing and then presented in a way that seems good for all! If you want to help the students hire more teachers,support and quit with more people who run things for more money than 5 of those people combined!!! Saving money is great. Let,Ãs look at business mangager who makes more than teachers, staff, or even close to person who is suppose to be in charge. While you cut teachers in the lowest grades where kids will be 25+ kids*
- *I am all for the school district saving money but from what I understand is that there is a 4th grade teacher retiring after this year but there has been no firm plan to hire a new teacher to fill that vacancy. If the district is ,Ãúsaving money,Ãù I would hope that would be put towards keeping the number of teachers we currently have. Class sizes are large as it is and with so many different needs and levels that would only be a detriment to our children.*
- *An effective way to cut costs*
- *Why exactly are we wanting to merge? What is the real reason this is being considered. Will teacher and staff lose jobs over this? What about class size will it increase?? Why so many changes in one year? If the merge is going to save money, then just how much? Can the staff and the teachers be guaranteed that jobs will not be lost?*
- *I'm all for cost savings if it will help students. Will there be job losses? How exactly will it save money?*
- *They are already in the same building and utilize the same entrance. The majority of people do not even think of them as two separate schools. We are one community, one school district, we have one middle school, one high school, and our community is and school district are trying hard to unite as one family...this is a step in that direction. Keep parents involved by scheduling meetings and asking questions. Our kids come home from school and tell us a lot about what goes on at school and how it could be better.*
- *If this could save the School District money it should be done as soon as possible*
- *We've had four kids attend Lake Superior Elementary School from k-5. The "two schools in a school" never really made sense to me. Seems to duplicate staff and functions. This is simply management and should not fundamentally affect the learning or the experience of the children at Lake Superior Elementary.*
- *Put money into the kids and not into administration!*
- *In order to give an answer of if they should or shouldn't be merged wouldn't it be better to know the pro's and con's of doing so. when i grew up they were one unit K-8th and i'm not sure it would be any different than it is now since they are housed in the same building already. I could see it saving the district money on some things but would it overall be a benefit?*
- *I didn't realize the schools operated seperately. Whatever is best for the school is fine by me*

- *I would need to know more about what the benefits or downfalls of this merger would be. I understand that it could save money, which of course is of priority. If it however would lead to less staff, and larger class sizes, I would not be in favor. How, if any, would it affect my child's education?*
- *Please consider the impacts on staff and students when making your decision. Make sure whatever money is saved does not come at a large "cost" in other areas.*
- *With children on both the LSP and LSI sides, I don't feel that there will be any impact on the students by merging the schools. From my view, they already operate as one school.*
- *If you can lower costs and still provide the same or better level of services then do it. Pay the school bus drivers more. They provide a critical service to the school district. They are alone with large numbers of students for several hours each day. They have to manage student behaviors while also driving a large vehicle safely in all manner of weather. Their job is only part-time, but the split shift scheduel makes it very difficult for them to find additional work. They only make about \$50 dollars per day, and recieve no additonal benefits. No wonder the bus company has a hard time finding enough drivers. This is shameful. Pay them more. I do not know enough information on this topic to answer this question. I have questions: What will happen to the Charter School? Who will be the principal of Marengo Valley? What will the heirarchy of look like? I would like to know what the principals of LSP, LSI and MVS think about this ideaPlease take your time to make this decision as it impacts parents, students, teachers, principals and community members.*
- *It was odd to me when I moved to Ashland that there were two different school names at the Elementary School. I see no benefit to the current duplicity. Should be smooth and simple. Thanks for keeping us informed.*
- *As it was explained to me, the main reason for the merger is financial efficiency when seeking subscriptions and licenses for educational tools. As long as there is no impact on the staff employed in our school (all current staff maintain current positions) I feel the merger is justified.*
- *The duplication of services is costing the taxpayers too much unnecessarily.*
- *From what I am understanding it would make the schools both run a bit more efficiently and provide a cost savings to the district. I am in support of both of these as long as the funds saved are used for programs supporting our youth and current staff. I would consider the elimination of positions as people retire or other positions become available. It would make sense to probably only have one principle but maybe one can move out to Marengo, or if one retires that position is not filled. This would go for all duplicate positions.*
- *It makes the most sense to run as 1 school building. We can pool resources and split duties. For example, the secretaries could split jobs/duties/reports.*
- *Based on the fact that the only thing about this merger that I know is what I have concluded myself as I have not seen any facts about the process or the process in which they plan to do it. The cost effectiveness of not having to do things twice would be advisable and the streamlining of the process for administration would be a great help to reporting and getting things accomplished.*
- *With the joining of the two schools into one. It might be worth looking at the daily management and staffing of two of everything may not be necessary. While special ed, music, gym, art, guidance, and RN are needed in multiple due to the quantity of children that they care for. Principals, Secretaries, and librarians may only need one with an assistant thus cutting costs.*
- *It is long overdue. Why wait?*
- *It is time for the Ashland school district to become financially responsible, focus on education and away from focusing on buildings and administration Quit wasting tax payers money, the amount of money that has been wasted in the last 20 years is a shame it could have been spend on enhancing our kids education instead of needless admin costs*

- *What is the use plan for the projected savings? Hopefully more support staff that actually are available and PROACTIVE for students with behavior needs*
- *To reduce the costs associated with having two separate schools as long as there are no changes to the staffing level or that effect the children's learning experience. It makes sense to merge in order to save money.*
- *The name should be changed to avoid confusion with other schools and to have the same name as the middle and high schools. Ashland Elementary School*
- *I'd like to know what staffing cuts will be made. I'm also interested in how much money would be saved and how this savings will impact the school.*
- *It appears some positions are redundant. Further, it appears costs can be saved while maintaining current levels of performance.*
- *Not sure why the school was not in the beginning. Does this include the charter school? If not it should as well.*
- *Not sure why two principals are needed. If schools are merged does one of the principles step down? Does the charter school continue doing what they do as a separate school as well.*
- *Just leave it alone! It has been working well. Make your cost savings elsewhere, like not hiring a consultant to tell us what is wrong with our schools. Parents are happy with the elementary school and it,Äôs successes. Focus your energy on fixing the problems at the middle school and high school levels. More time and energy should be focused on trying to find counselors for all the kids who have trauma ,Äî that needs to be addressed. Please stop looking to fix things that are not broken, but focus on what is.*
- *If the school district can save money by merging the two schools then why not?*
- *You share the same building, use the same teachers, have the same phone number, have already combined the office to one central location within the building... I hate to break it to you all, but you're only 1 school now.*
- *I feel like this is a non-issue and waste of time considering my previous reasoning. It's already 1 school.*
- *I have a kindergartener and a preschooler. So I don,Äôt have much experience with school kids. And zero experience with the Intermediate school. So it doesn,Äôt matter to me. My only concern is my sons being around much older kids and learning things that Will corrupt their innocence.*
- *How can I have an opinion when I just found about it three days ago. Nothing has been discussed about the pros or cons.*
- *I believe the title does not make the school and as far as I can tell there won,Äôt really be much changes besides the name.*
- *If it is a cost savings, it makes sense. I feel that most elementary schools are K-5 entities, so having 2 is unusual. I do feel that keeping the current alignment with a K-2 principal and a 3-5 principal is logical, as is the grade-level teaming and all other practices at the school.*
- *If it saves money/time, I don't see why not*
- *Because I have no children in that school*
- *Reduction of unnecessary costs. In the merger, I hope the elementary and intermediate libraries are retained. We have so many nice books and the librarians are wonderful. It's very important for children to have plenty of books and other learning materials, tailored to their age and reading levels.*
- *I don,Äôt know why it was never merged in the first place. Have 1 principal & 1 assistant principal.*
- *I understand there are some savings but can not be told how much. I also would like all costs checked out because after doing some research I have found out there could possibly be some additional costs with library/technology. For example needing to buy more than one license for some resources such as bookflix depending on what the capacity is for one license. Currently we have one license and share with the other school. I would want to make sure all*

areas are checked out carefully so there is a considerable savings. I am also concerned for Title Funding and want to make sure we do what will allow for the most Title Funding.

- The only information I have seen released in writing is about this survey and the possibility of a merger. I was unable to attend the listening session, so I don't have any information on how this will affect the kids daily routine or school set up. I think not enough information yet to give an informed opinion. Information needs to be distributed via email so that parents are more informed before completing a survey on our opinion on the merger. The two already share a building and some staff, so what would change?
- I don't see a problem with merging the schools as long as the two principals are serving in the same capacity as now.
- I think if a merge is happening, it is worth looking into a name change. Every other school in our district is named with its location, Marengo valley, Ashland Middle, and Ashland High. I think Ashland Elementary School shows that we are unified within our community and starts helping to build a sense of place with our elementary students in recognizing that they are Oredockers, too! I would also like to know what the actual fiscal savings from the merger are before the board makes a decision. I would hope that the school district would look into maintaining a minimum of 5 teachers per grade level and perhaps using the merger cost savings to maintain smaller class sizes for our population, as large academic and social needs. That seems like a responsible decision for students and dedicated professional staff!
- Cost savings
- Never understood why they were not. Always thought it was a waste of resources and useless expense to have them divided. The school district is small enough.
- I believe that merging the two schools would be a financial benefit to the school district. Likewise, I believe that merging the two schools would allow for a more unified and aligned curriculum that would ultimately serve the students and our community better.
- Cost savings and simplification are important.
- If feedback from parents of both schools are not met through surveys and meetings, reaching out should continue until at least 25% of parents are heard. Keep up the good work.
- Economics!
- When my son was there I seen and heard and delt with lots of problems with older children when he was younger. I'm not sure it would be beneficial to the students to do this. There is already not enough aids on the play ground, or aids that watch the kids instead of visiting or watching there own child. Keeping them separate helps elevate the issues of inappropriate verbal interactions that happen when there isn't enough supervision. You should visit the school grounds outside during recess before you make this decision.
- I think it makes sense that the schools would be merged because it is altogether one whole elementary school. Also it would be uniform with other elementary schools in the district. Why weren't the schools merged years ago?
- I've never understood why they are two different schools. Just have one elementary school in town.
- The merge will save the district money. A good idea as long as it does not eliminate staff.
- Why not? Save money! Less confusing!
- Look closely at the declining numbers of Charter school and consider either eliminating that school or definitely reducing the number of teachers. Frustrating when LSE children have such high numbers in their classes and the charter school has such low numbers of students. Also, consider the number of principals and secretaries. We definitely need more hands available to help with student needs (behaviors). When the merge happens I would think that it wouldn't be necessary to have two secretaries. Could save money on eliminating some office staff. Seems as if teachers get a lot of office work, secretarial work, places on them and it used to be done by secretaries, but no longer happens.

- *I would need more information before I could make a sound decision. I would want the discussion to be honest and the reasons to be transparent, as well as being in the best interest of the students.*
- *How much would the merge save the district? Would the savings be used for the benefit of the students and staff at this school? Specifically where would the savings go to benefit this school?*
- *This was said well over ten years ago and nothing was done. It makes sense to minimize staff and eliminate redundancy.*
- *There are several other cost saving measures that should also be considered. It's time to bring in outside assistance and have a comprehensive review done of all aspects of operations. Thank you very much for considering this.*
- *We just spent 13 million on a field house, why are we cost conscious now? Please tell the public how operations will change and how much money will be saved?*