

January 3, 2022

Dear Mr. Olsen,

It has always been our intention to be productive and proactive in our effort to find the best possible outcome for our students and our community. At this juncture, we believe it is prudent and necessary to postpone both the Ripton School District Board's attendance at the January 19th meeting—and any final determinations by the State Board of Education—because relevant information and data is still being collected. The following letter outlines our reasoning.

Since the State Board of Education's Sept 15th request to find a resolution with the Addison Central School District, the Ripton School Board has engaged in multiple efforts to work with the district. We attempted to be part of a process of compromise reasonably examining the circumstances resulting in Ripton's decision to leave the ACSD. Unfortunately, after limited correspondence and meetings, the ACSD's willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue and negotiation has been disappointing.

Compromise is the seed of change. Yet, compromise requires two mutually engaged parties. Despite our efforts, ACSD has not reciprocated our effort to engage in solution-orientated discussions. We believe only a clear mandate by the SBE for Ripton and ACSD to *actively* negotiate will bring both parties to the table. A working group mandated to examine the specific issues that led us to this point and create proposed changes would be beneficial for all. Please see the attached document outlining the initial requests we made to the ACSD. We do not feel these requests were given fair deliberation, and there has been no further action towards finding a middle ground.

It is our responsibility to prepare for all realistic outcomes. The lack of forward momentum with the ACSD has led us to explore alternative ways of achieving an effective, efficient education system. This initiative has led to the beginning stages of evaluating the viability of partnering with Lincoln to meet our respective educational and administrative needs. In the past month, these conversations have taken significant steps forward. With the assistance of professional expertise and innovative approaches, we are working to build models that test and examine how a Ripton and Lincoln partnership would succeed.

Due to the uncharted water we navigate, the absence of established guidelines, and the need to accurately vet our remaining options, we require more time. We agree it is not in anyone's interest to prolong this situation. However, a fair assessment and accurate determination is not

possible without complete information. With additional time, Ripton will be prepared to present findings and proposed outcomes at Town Meeting. Our goals are to:

- Pursue all actionable steps to bridge divide between ACSD and Ripton
- Await four-town vote from MAUSD to determine if a partnership with Lincoln is possible
- Construct a thorough, vetted plan for a Ripton and Lincoln shared Supervisory Union
- Allow Ripton to hold town meetings to determine whether the community approves the options presented

In the interest of reaching an equitable, balanced, and realistic solution, we would greatly appreciate your help in ensuring a functional negotiation, and hope you will grant us the time needed to complete our due diligence.

Sincerely,

The Ripton School District Board