

Subject: Letter to the Education Committee from Stockbridge Parent

Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2025 12:29 PM

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Beata Rusch. My husband and I are parents of two children who attend Stockbridge Elementary School. We are devastated to hear of the possible closure of our school, and we feel compelled to speak on behalf of our family and our community.

We made the deliberate decision to start our family in Stockbridge because of access to a small, community-based school. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this decision proved invaluable. Our school was able to adapt quickly, communicate clearly with families, and provide the safest and most “normal” learning environment possible during an incredibly difficult time. That level of flexibility and care is only possible in a small school setting.

Stockbridge Elementary is part of an efficient district that spends below the state average per pupil. This demonstrates responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Closing a school that operates efficiently does not solve the larger financial challenges facing education in our state.

As a rural community, our children already face limited opportunities. Distance makes access to afterschool programs, enrichment activities, and alternative educational options extremely difficult. Removing our local school would further isolate our children and families.

Our town does not even have a gas station. The school is the heart of our community—it is the one place that brings families together, supports children, and sustains our town’s future. Losing it would mean losing far more than a building.

The financial crisis facing education did not originate with local schools. Years of state-level mismanagement have led us here. Act 73 feels like a temporary bandage rather than a solution to the root causes of these problems. Schools like ours are not the issue—and they should not be the ones paying the price.

We urge you to consider the real human cost of school closures and to protect small, rural schools that are serving their communities well. Our children deserve stability, access, and an education rooted in the communities they call home.

Respectfully,

Beata Rusch

Parent, Stockbridge Elementary School.