STATE OF ILLINOIS
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

In re:

A PETITION TO FORM A COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSISTING OF ALL OF ABINGDON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 217 AND AVON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 176

ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION

Pursuant to Section 11E-50 of the School Code, I received on June 27, 2012, the record of the proceedings regarding the proposed formation of a community unit district from all of Abingdon Community Unit School District 217 and Avon Community Unit School District 176.

I have reviewed the entire record of the proceedings held before the Regional Superintendent, including the transcript of the hearing and all evidence presented at the hearing, and based upon the record, I make the following findings and conclusions.

FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

1. The petition was filed in the Office of the Regional Superintendent of Schools of Knox County on May 7, 2012. Notice of the public hearing was given. The hearing was convened in accordance with Article 11E of the School Code.

2. The Regional Superintendent of Schools issued approval of the petition on June 26, 2012.

3. The record indicates that the approved petition:
   a) requests the submission of the proposition at the regular scheduled election (on November 6, 2012) for the purpose of voting for or against the establishment of a community unit school district in the territory;
   b) requests the election of board members on an “at large” basis at the same election as the consolidation question;
   c) describes the territory comprising the proposed district;
   d) sets the maximum tax rates for educational, operations and maintenance, and pupil transportation purposes the proposed district shall be authorized to levy, as required by statute;
e) also sets the maximum tax rate for working cash purposes, as permitted by statute;

f) does not include a description of how supplementary State deficit difference payments made under subsection (c) of Section 11E-135 will be allocated among the new district or districts proposed to be formed, the non-inclusion of which I do not believe fatally flaws the petition as any deficit difference payment would be paid to the new resulting district as required by statute;

g) was filed by the Board of Education of Abingdon Community Unit School District 217 and the Board of Education of Avon Community Unit School District 176; and

h) designates a Committee of Ten of the petitioners.

4. The record indicates that the territory described in the petition consists of two entire contiguous unit districts.

As reported by the proponents of the petition, the consolidation of the districts into a community unit school district will result in the following:

a) the ability to provide an enhanced curriculum.

b) the ability to offer more vocational, honors, and dual-credit courses.

c) the ability to use existing school buildings to house the combined student population.

d) the opportunity for middle school staff to focus on the middle school population and high school staff to focus on the high school population.
DECISION

Having reviewed the petition, transcript of the hearing and supporting evidence, and the Regional Superintendent's decision, and taking into consideration the school needs and conditions of the affected districts and in the area adjacent thereto, the division of funds and assets that will result from the action described in the petition, the best interests of the schools of the area, and the best interests and the educational welfare of the pupils residing therein, I hereby approve the petition. Approval of this petition will allow the submission of the proposition at the regular scheduled election on November 6, 2012, for the purpose of voting for or against the establishment of a community unit school district in the territory.

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

DATED: 2/1/12

This is a final administrative order and is subject to review under the provisions of the Administrative Review Law, 735 ILCS 5/3-101 et seq.