

South Eastern School District

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An Equal Opportunity School District

December 21, 2007

The Honorable Stan Saylor
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Cape Horn Plaza Road
Suite B-4
Red Lion, PA 17356

Subject: Thompson Road Emergency Access

Representative Saylor,

South Eastern School District is seeking your assistance to provide for the completion of an emergency access road at its Fawn Grove campus. There has been a lot of controversy surrounding our request, which I will outline, along with our reasons why, the access road is critical to the safety of our students, staff and community.

At present, Thompson Road and the emergency access road leading to Thompson Road is unpaved, narrow, and contains numerous deep ruts. Heading east on Thompson Road at the intersection of Thompson Road and Fawn Road (SR 425), there is a concrete island that is not conducive to our buses making any turns onto Fawn Road. Similar road conditions exist heading west on Thompson Road.

The District's concern is that in an emergency, or when there is an event (graduation, sports events, concerts), we are unable to unload the campus in a timely manner. With the close proximity of Exelon, our concerns are truly valid. The Auditor General has provided District's with a 17 point checklist that will be included in District audits. The Department of Auditor General has developed a school safety and security checklist that it will begin implementing with its regular school audits, effective the fourth quarter of 2007. One of the questions on the checklist asks, "Does your safe schools plan include steps for the evacuation of students, staff and visitors, including the district-wide coordination of student transportation, in the event of an emergency?" We contend that the condition of the emergency access does not allow us to fulfill this portion of the checklist.

The difficulty for South Eastern is that we are receiving opposition from some members of the community who feel that improving Thompson Road will not only increase traffic and speeds on the road, it will also increase their taxes. The area in question is a part of both Fawn Borough and Fawn Township. Although we have the support of Fawn Borough, Fawn Township states that the road, by their Ordinance, is for emergency access only.

We have spoken with Jeff Joy from the York County Emergency Management Agency, who expressed surprise that when Kennard High School was being built in 2000, two egresses, in opposite direction of each other, were not required.

I would like to contend that trying to satisfy the requirements of The Department of the Auditor General, Fawn Township, Fawn Borough, and the wishes of the opposing residents, that the safety of our students and staff are paramount. Too often we fail to coordinate our efforts.

South Eastern District is requesting your assistance in securing funds to pay for the improvement of this emergency access road and Thompson Road, perhaps through a grant from Exelon and/or additional transportation funds dedicated to improving Thompson Road. We are willing to be a part of a coordinated team in coming up with a solution to insure the safety and security of our students, staff, and the residents of the South Eastern School District.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience to discuss how we can work together to secure the funds necessary to comply with State regulations and insure the safety of our community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tracy Shank
Superintendent