



Aledo / Westmer Consolidation

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

* These *recommendations* of the Aledo/ Westmer Committee of Ten are for the purpose of considering consolidation of the two districts.

* Final decisions will be made by the new School Board.

General Information and Recommendations

How can we contact the Committee of 10 members with questions and concerns that arise?

- You may contact the Committee of 10 at COT@aledoschools.org or by contacting the unit offices at each school. (582-2238) Aledo, (584-4173) Westmer.

Why do Aledo and Westmer need to consolidate?

- To provide a quality education for our children.
- The cost of everything is up, but the income that the schools receive is down. Many factors determine the financial stability of a school. For example: EAV's, General State Aid, Average Daily Attendance, etc.
- Enrollment continues to drop in both districts, which causes problems in finances, scheduling, and course offerings.

Will the consolidation SAVE money?

- Course offerings and Extra Curricular activities can be increased with a consolidation while making the budget more efficient by pooling our resources.
- We will be able to utilize school buildings without the need for new construction.
- Savings will come by eliminating duplicate expenses.

What happens if Aledo and Westmer do not consolidate?

- We cannot predict the future, but our research shows that Aledo and Westmer have the potential for a merger that will provide better educational programs without significantly increasing expenditures, and we are close enough and similar enough for a smooth transition.

If a consolidation issue gets voted down, what are the options if a school cannot continue on?

- A school can deactivate its high school and pay tuition for each student sent to any school that borders its district.
- An entire district could dissolve, and then its students would attend schools that border its district.
- Any property owner(s) can petition out of one district into another bordering district at any time if approved by both Boards of Education and the Regional Office of Education (ROE).
- The Regional Office or the State can step in at some point and decide our future if we don't.
- If a consolidation vote fails, the same schools cannot come back with the same consolidation vote for a period of two years; however, if the same schools and one or more additional schools wish to consolidate, they do not have a waiting period before taking another vote.
- The Alwood/ ROWVA consolidation process was cancelled. Consequently, ALWOOD is now asking their voters to approve an eighty cent increase in the Education Fund.

What is the timeline for forming the newly consolidated district?

- The School Board, Regional Superintendent and State Superintendent approved petition.
- Consolidation vote decided in the November 2008 Election.
- A consolidated school board could possibly be elected at the November 2008 Election. The new school board must have seven members. (*State statute*)

- If the consolidation fails, the newly elected school board would be defunct.
- If the consolidation passes, the newly elected school board becomes official on July 1, 2009.
- Prior to that time, the current school boards retain jurisdiction over the separate school districts.
- The new district would begin July 1, 2009.
- The new district's school year would begin August 2009.

Personnel

Which teachers' contract will be used?

- The new school board determines the contract and any early retirement offers in negotiations with all staff.

Has the faculty of both districts been asked for input about their feelings?

- Surveys were conducted in both schools.
- Meetings were held with staff.
- Teachers were actively involved with the consolidation recommendation and were very positive.

How many teachers and staff would lose their jobs in a consolidation?

- The plan is to keep all buildings open. Job loss should be minimal, but the exact number if any cannot be determined yet.

Athletics

Will there be tryouts and cuts on sports teams?

- The possibility exists that tryouts and cuts for sports teams will occur.
- IHSA policy states that the number of players on teams is limited..
- Additional sports may be added to give opportunities not currently available.
- All High School Sports except volleyball and Basketball are co-oped at this time.

Where will money for new uniforms come from for sports, music, etc.?

- The money would come from the combined financial resources of the newly consolidated district.
- Incentive money (given by the state to newly consolidated districts) could be used for one time expenditures.

Facilities

What is the current facilities recommendation?

1. Students in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade remain at the current grade schools.
2. Students in grades fifth and sixth would be placed in the current Aledo Junior High School.
3. Students in seventh and eighth grades would be placed in the current Westmer Junior/ Senior High School.
4. Students in grades nine through twelve would attend the current Aledo High School.
5. The Superintendent's office would be moved to one of the attendance centers.

Why, as an Aledo tax payer, am I paying for a new junior high that will house 5th and 6th grades?

- We feel it is better to have the fifth and sixth grade students close to Apollo. There are assemblies and other activities that the students could share.
- The school in Joy offers vocational facilities which are not offered in Aledo and could benefit 7th and 8th graders. Also, the Joy facility has multiple gyms, which means practices could be held immediately after school. This would allow students more time at home for school work and family time. Additionally, parents would not need to make extra trips to school for late practices.