

Dear Members of the PLT Community,

We are writing to inform the communities of Prophetstown, Lyndon, and Tampico that we are formally exploring the possibility of expanding our sports cooperative with Erie. The current cooperative has been in operation for nearly 20 years and spans six sports. Erie has proposed extending that cooperative to include all sports offered by the two districts. We have also discussed the possibility of including other extracurricular activities, like band and scholastic bowl, as well as academics in our cooperative agreement with Erie. We will be discussing these proposals at a joint school board meeting with Erie on September 18, 2017 at our Unit Office. At that meeting, we hope to reach a tentative agreement on the future of the cooperative. That agreement will be firmed up over the following two months and, if everything goes as planned, will be voted on by both boards of education at their November meetings.

Our goal in exploring an all sports cooperative with Erie is to provide both our current and future students the opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. As our student numbers decline, this is becoming increasingly difficult. Our district is already unable to support a sophomore girls' basketball team, and in the coming years, Erie will be in a similar situation with some boys' athletics. Expanding our cooperative with Erie would alleviate these issues for both schools. Conversely, if we do not expand the cooperative and Erie decides to pursue a cooperative with another school, we will be forced to drop some sports and join another conference for the others.

We are well aware of the concerns that some members of our community have expressed about expanding the cooperative with Erie. The two most pertinent, in our minds, are that the current cooperative does not function very well and that some students will not be able to participate in certain sports because of the number of kids on the teams. We share these concerns and are working to address them. For the former, we are consolidating the existing cooperative agreements into a single master agreement. We are planning to finalize this agreement prior to our joint board meeting in September and put it into force regardless of whether or not the sports cooperative is expanded. It addresses most of the concerns that we have heard voiced about the current cooperative. For the latter, if we expand the cooperative, we have discussed a two-prong approach: 1) separate freshman and JV teams for sports with excess numbers with full schedules for each team, and 2) over time, expanding the number of extracurricular activities offered.

In conclusion, we want to be clear that, at present, no agreement has been reached with Erie for expanding the sports cooperative. This is something that we are exploring and will decide upon in the coming months. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to voice them at an upcoming meeting. We will do our best to address them.

Sincerely,

Your PLT Board of Education