

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REGION 14 OFFICIALS BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUSING CHAOS

Over the past year, more than 1,000 parents and other residents spoke out against reconfiguration, the method in which it was being adopted, and the performance of Superintendent Robert D. Cronin and Business Manager Jay Hubelbank. Parents such as myself and many others pleaded for the Board of Education to research this change for a full year before "jumping in," and to do the due diligence required, but to no avail.

These parents and citizens of our two towns followed the rules, proceeding legally with votes, hearings and petitions. Whenever an individual's credentials or work experience was brought into question, the questioner was accused of personal attacks.

I believe it is time to reflect on the credentials and experience Messrs.

Cronin and Hubelbank have brought to Region 14. If you delve deeply enough, you will find significant lack of experience, lack of research and studies, and a trail of negative results from the schools they left behind.

I am not personally attacking anyone, I am stating the facts I know. Are there more facts? I am sure there are.

Wednesday was a catastrophe for Region 14. Mix-ups in morning pickups, delayed pickup times and school start times is to be expected the first day, but not by hours.

I, along with hundreds of other parents and even some board members, retrieved our children from school directly, and many children did not arrive home until after 6:30 pm. This includes kindergarten through second graders who were supposed to be dismissed at 2:50 from Bethlehem, missing their stops and being brought to Mitchell Elementary School for yet another bus ride.

Some children had rashes Thursday because they did not have bathrooms available to them during the long ordeal. Very young children missed their bus stops. They suffered hunger, exhaustion and stress. How can these children be productive and learning in the coming days? The fear they must overcome is greater than will be acknowledged by most.

The bus drivers, teachers and principals worked valiantly yesterday, and what a day they had — being accosted by angry and upset parents, and crying, stressed-out children. They should be praised for their calm and cool under pressure and for putting in the extra time and effort needed.

The blame for this catastrophe cannot be laid at the feet of the bus company.

It is possible for us to realize our errors and move forward in a responsible manner. I call for the dismissal of these two administrators.

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Woodbury