

Disagree, Live in Harmony

To the Editor:

I personally feel blessed to live in the greatest country in the world and in a wonderful town. One of the foundations of this great country is our ability to disagree on issues, yet still live in harmony.

Clearly some issues elicit more emotion than others, and the communities of Woodbury and Bethlehem have encountered a fiery one with school reconfiguration. We have seen a lot of emotion on all sides of this issue.

Anyone that studies the history of a successful democracy will quickly find that effective communication is what leads to solutions and avoids deepening tensions.

We have an opportunity to be great role models for our children and one another by communicating, and doing so with respect. That doesn't mean we can't speak honestly and directly. Not to do so will ensure mediocrity.

With a contentious issue like this, conversations can get heated, especially when anyone feels that their voice is not heard. Reconfiguration has many facets, with impact to our kids, positive or negative as the stakes.

The issues are not complicated. I've personally spent considerable time talking to educators that have considered grade-span reconfiguration from around the country. If I didn't try to share my leanings with Region 14 administrators, it would be a disservice my community.

Likewise, it's a gross disservice to the community when that input is truly not welcome by our administrators.

I applaud everyone caring enough to voice a thoughtful opinion about our schools. Let's encourage the communication based on facts, not emotions, that will make our schools stronger. Anyone that suggests otherwise must have slept through history class. And you know what they say about people that fail to learn from history.

Challenging important decisions is the American way. As Ronald Reagan liked to say "Trust, but verify."

Scott Baider

Woodbury