

**Testimony Before the Board of Education**  
**November 10, 2004**

My name is Scott Langerman, and I am the father of two current Seven Locks students and one future one. Put another way, my wife and I are in this for the long haul, as we'll be Churchill Cluster parents until the year 2020. My only point tonight is a simple one – that a decision to close Seven Locks Elementary School and surplus the land on which it sits will reveal a fundamentally flawed understanding of the needs, realities and desires of the countless families and communities who must live with that decision.

Some of the proponents behind a quick resolution to this debate would have us believe that what's on the table is a straightforward choice between a brand new school and a renovated 40-year old facility. Reality, however, is much more complicated than that, and it's ramifications much further-reaching. At its core this is of course a question of what kind of building would best serve our children and their educations, and there's reasonable room for disagreement and debate on that subject. But to limit the debate to that question alone is to misunderstand the scope of its impact. While I stand before you as a Seven Locks parent and want nothing more than what's best for our children, factored into that determination must necessarily be questions of community, lifestyle, green space, feasibility, due process, expectations and empowerment.

When all of these issues and more are given the weight they deserve, it's impossible to justify the permanent closure of Seven Locks and the surplus of its land. One need only to look at the portable classrooms in the back of so many of our elementary schools to recognize that there's a problem out there. Nor does one need to be a math major to understand that current overcrowding + continued residential development + population growth = the need to hold on to every available piece of school property in our region.

It's been said that "with great power, comes great responsibility". I love that line, and I believe in that line. I also believe it applies here, in this room, to this issue. You, the Board of Education, possess great power. And, I would argue, have a responsibility not just to current Seven Locks families such as ours, but to generations of Seven Locks families yet to come. I ask, then, that you use this power wisely and prudently – don't close our school, and don't sell its land.

Thank you.