

## Letter: Price one pays for not listening to reason

Thursday, February 17, 2005

To the editor:

As I read the articles about the redistricting and the costs of operating the Wood End School, I find it difficult not to smile. During the special election on the Wood End School, myself and others tried to "educate" the voters and were called a small group of "malcontents."

Prior to the completion of the plans for the Wood End School, the then-chairman of the Conservation Commission stated, "They knew it couldn't be built," we now find there is not enough parking on-site; a proposed path from Fox Run cannot be built because the maximum amount of non-impervious space has been used, and it would not be in compliance with handicap requirements.

Several clippings from various groups and the then-chairman of the FinCom, School Committee and the administration stated that the cost of operating five schools would only be \$145,000 more that the cost of four schools. We now find that staffing Wood End will cost \$395,000 plus \$135,000 for additional teachers and a specialist; these costs do not include heat and utilities.

At the time, we "malcontents" pointed out extra costs related to the then-proposed new school, such as sidewalks, crossing guards and field maintenance. We now find that because of a dramatic increase in health benefits for town employees, perhaps a small section of sidewalks will be constructed (see 1906 Town Report same situation) and less crossing guards (even if people wanted the jobs) and one more person to take the care of the school and other parks.





A note of interest: two former members of the School Committee have gone from Reading as has the former superintendent for another town for 40,000 more per year and left us with a building that is shaped in an "H" in his memory.

It was not the School Committee or administration that broke the trust, it was yourself: you chose not to listen to the "malcontents."






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