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## Nell Holcomb R-IV School District

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6547 State Highway 177  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-3644 FAX: (573) 334-9552  
Bleau Deckerd, Superintendent Mike Wortmann, Principal

Dear Nell Holcomb Families,

Over the past few months, the school board, administration, and staff have spent a great deal of time assessing all areas and programs of the district. We have analyzed finances, school safety, transportation, curriculum, staffing, and more. When I came to Nell Holcomb in July 2019, the school board's #1 priority was to grow our financial reserves and put the district in a better financial position for the future; all while continuing to keep our students safe and offering a top notch education.

Nell Holcomb finished the 2019 fiscal year last July at 8% financial reserves. The Missouri Department of Secondary and Elementary Education's recommendation for a school the size of Nell Holcomb is a minimum of 40% financial reserves. Current expenditures combined with the continuous drop in revenue from the State and Federal government has created a scenario where the district is unable to maintain our daily needs while trying to grow our financial reserves. Without an increase in revenue the district will be forced to make major cuts to education while keeping up with the demands for student safety, transportation, and routine maintenance.

At the January School Board Meeting, the school board voted to place PROPOSITION HAWKS on the April ballot. PROPOSITION HAWKS is a 47 cent levy increase for the district. On Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> you will have the opportunity to vote on PROPOSITION HAWKS to guarantee a bright future for the students at Nell Holcomb R-IV. A successful Proposition will guarantee the following things:

1. An increase in student safety including:
  - Maintaining a school resource officer on our campus
  - Additional security cameras
  - Updating door locks and entrances
2. Immediate purchase of two new school buses to update the current fleet and the ability to maintain a 5 year rotation of all school buses. Currently our bus fleet includes buses ranging from 5 years to 15 years of age, and we have been hit with several breakdowns throughout the school year, which in some instances resulted in our buses being stranded on the route with students on board.
3. Maintaining smaller class sizes and teacher/student ratios
4. Updated text books and instructional materials
5. Updated technology to prepare students for high school

There are several ways you can help with PROPOSITION HAWKS:

1. Educate yourself on the issues and stay informed. My door is always open, and I am always willing to talk with you about current issues facing our school and the goals we have to fix these issues. We will also have additional information coming out in the next few weeks as well as two town hall meetings on February 11<sup>th</sup> and March 10<sup>th</sup>. Stay tuned for more information.
2. **MAKE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE!** We have voter registration cards in the office. You can fill them out and get them back to me (Mr. Deckerd) and I will turn them into the County Clerk by the deadline.
3. If you are interested in helping out with the PROPOSITION HAWKS committee, please let Mr. Deckerd know. The more people we have helping spread the positive message, the better!

In closing, I want to thank you for your continued support for our students and the school. Nell Holcomb is a special place, and after six short months, I can see the important part the school plays in this community and the surrounding area. The decision to place PROPOSITION HAWKS on the ballot was not an easy one. However, we feel it is necessary, to ensure the doors of Nell Holcomb remain open for many years to come to provide an awesome education for our children!

Blessings to you and your family!

Mr. Bleau Deckerd: Superintendent

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