



LITTLEFIELD



INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOME OF THE FIGHTING WILDCATS

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It is commonplace that, near the beginning of each Texas Legislative Session, I am asked to respond to questions similar to the following:

It has been suggested that there is a difference between districts that are 'small by choice' and those that are 'small by necessity.' And also that districts that are 'small by choice' should consolidate. This is not a new argument, but we need your help in answering it.

Here are some questions for you:

1. Is your district 'small by choice'?
2. Why is it important to allow a small district in close proximity to another district to remain separate? In other words, why is it important for the state to support districts that are 'small by choice'?

There are many states in the U. S. A. that are barely larger than some Texas counties. Are they "small by choice"? Maybe the Feds should just force them to consolidate with other bordering states. Just look at the money that you could save in elections alone.

Get the picture? In order to bring clarity on any hypothesis, take it to extremes. If the test works, the hypothesis at hand may be a viable solution. If it does not, it probably will not work on a practical scale either.

Another example: There are many small countries in the world that cover fewer square miles than Texas. Why doesn't the United Nations or some other supreme governing entity force them to consolidate with other countries?

Both of my examples are totally different than school consolidation, right?

WRONG!!!! Here's why..... There exists an inherent ownership and proprietary right in each situation. Each school district that is "small by choice" is the heart and soul of a community of people. Each of these communities was founded on shared values that are unique to the people who worked to build them. These values are passed down from generation to generation, and a distinct way of life is perpetuated. The same is true of the small countries I mentioned earlier. Each perpetuates its own culture and identity.

When the legislature of the state of Texas discusses forcing small districts to consolidate, in essence, they are considering forcing communities to give up their inimitable identity, culture, and way of life in order to save money. Can you place a price tag on these ideals? They are very similar to many principles for which Americans have fought in the past and are still fighting, today.

In my opinion, it is not a matter of money; it is a matter of principle. And the right path to take is very apparent.