To the members of the Rox Alumni:

First of all, please allow me to introduce myself.  My name is Roy Wrightsman.  I am a 1998 graduate of Turkey Run High School and a 2001 graduate of Purdue University.  I currently work at Nucor Steel in Crawfordsville, am a part-time farmer with my father, and am the Washington Township Trustee.  I am married to Lisa (Akers) Wrightsman, a 2004 graduate of Rockville High School and currently a 5th grade teacher at Rockville Elementary School.  I am the chairman of the Rockville, Turkey Run Reorganization Commitee, one of three members appointed by Turkey Run.  I serve with the other two Turkey Run appointees, Jean Ann Craycraft and Marilyn Rode, as well as the three Rockville appointees, Alan Ader, Greg Harbison, and Larry Gambaiani.

We as a committee were appointed by the current school boards to develop a plan to reorganize Rockville Community School Corporation and Turkey Run Community School Corporation into one single school corporation.  We were not asked, nor are we charged with, consolidating Rockville and Turkey Run into one school, renaming any current schools, changing any current mascots, changing the roles of any current buildings, etc.

The current school boards have been wrestling with funding cuts for the last several years.  They have had to look at reducing staffing, changing or cutting programs, and the like.  Much of this is due to declining enrollments at both schools, and therefore reduced funding from the state.  Since the enrollment peak in 1976, Rockville has lost 37% of it's enrollment in grades K-12.  Since Turkey Run's enrollment peak in 1969, it has lost 48% of it's enrollment in grades K-12.  These are startling numbers to the current administrations, the school boards, and the committee.  However, even more important than funding, reductions in enrollment have lead to reductions in offerings for our students, whether it be in vocational courses, higher level mathematics and sciences, or in many extra-curricular activities, which is what most people publicly see.

I believe that both school boards are very visionary in their consideration of this process, which none of them took lightly.  They are looking to the future and seeking to maintain and improve the educational experience for the children of the districts.  I can assure you that the reorganization committee is not taking this process lightly either.  We are working VERY diligently to ensure that the process is open, honest, fair, and well thought out.  We have been building information, learning the facts about the districts, consulting state law on the process, and talking with people about their ideas.

So, what is the process of reorganization you might ask?  First of all, both school boards appointed members to the committee.  We as that committee are to develop a plan to reorganize the central administrations of both schools into one.  This means that we will determine the number of school board members, their residency districts, election procedures, terms and the like.  We will also provide recommendations on the central office staffing, such as superintendent, corporation secretary, and other staffing as necessary.  We will also name the new school corporation.  Once we build a plan of reorganization, it will be submitted to both current school boards for their consideration.  If and when they both approve identical plans, it will be submitted to the voters at the next general election.  The voters will then have their say.  The question must pass in BOTH current districts separately for it to become implemented.  If one or the other does not approve it, it will be dead.

To address the concept again, the reorganization committee is to develop a plan to combine the central administrations of both current school corporations into one.  We are not consolidating Rockville and Turkey Run High School in this process.  It is conceivable that at some point in the future that the new corporation and school board will have to look at some restructuring of the district.

I would like to suggest to all of you that we all must look at what is best for the current and future children of Parke County.  This process is not about the Rockville Rox, Turkey Run Warriors, Bellmore Golden Eagles, Mecca Arabs, Greene Township Green Aces, Marshall Bobcats, Bloomingdale Bulldogs, or Tangier Tigers or anyone else.  It is not about the TR class of 1998, Rockville class of 2004, TR class of 1971 or Rockville class of 1968.  This process is about the future of education for the children of these areas.  While we all have great pride in our schools, traditions, mascots, rivalries, and colors, we also must be willing to look to the future and remember that we owe it to the children of the future to give them every opportunity possible to succeed in their education and therefore in their lives.  The future of education is changing and we must be forward-looking to ensure that we all do our duty to the children of our area and give them the best possible opportunity to succeed in the ever-changing world.

If you would like more information, the committee has been working diligently to ensure that as much information as possible is getting to the public.  The Parke County Sentinel is covering our meetings, we are on facebook (look for Rockville, Turkey Run School Corporation Reorganization), and both school websites get their information straight from the committee.  You can also contact the school's administration offices.  You can also contact the committee by email:  trroxreorganization@gmail.com, or any of the committee members themselves.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to outline what reorganization means.  I also would like to commend your organization.   I am quite impressed with your alumni network and it is evident the amount of pride you take in Rockville.

Thank You For Your Time,

-Roy Wrightsman

Chairman, Rockville, Turkey Run Reorganization Committee

Turkey Run Class of 1998