

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you today to express my concern over the proposed closure of Parkview Secondary School. First let me say that Parkview should not be considered when doing planning for Secondary Schools in Hamilton. Because Parkview is unique to the board-where as all of the students attending Parkview have an "Identification" on file and therefore Standard/normal programming and classes are not suitable for any of these kids. Parkview is not a school for average kids-average kids can function at schools that are running at capacity where there are in excess of 1000 kids all scrambling for room, average kids can and will ask for what they need. Parkview kids rely on the programs in place-the life skills programs that teach them how to cook or shop, how to sew and manage a household budget – the job skills programs that introduce them to career paths such as esthetics, electrical, auto, botany, baking and so much more.

I read that the average Parkview student starts grade 9 at a grad 4 reading level. I wonder how these students would fare in a school filled to capacity with teachers who are "ideally-utilized"??? I wonder how many of these kids would bother to come to school at all?

I argue that 'average' kids can function and flourish in these most financially responsible of educational institutions. But these Parkview kids – by nature of the abilities of their circumstances and their unique educational needs – they need a unique school where the building and staff are able to adapt to the students, instead of trying to make the students adapt to the system. Parkview is that school – Parkview has the facilities to teach career paths and jobs skills to kids who may never have another opportunity like this. Parkview has the teacher ratio and small setting that enables these kids to feel safe – because the staff know each and every child, they understand their needs and are able to give these kids the time and attention needed to help them to reach their potential.

Yes it may cost more per student to keep Parkview running, but how much is a child's future worth. They are worth every penny to be able to keep these 500 kids, these 500 family members together. Self confidence is one of the biggest struggles these kids face, believing that they can be successful in school and in life is the largest barrier they have to overcome... Parkview promotes inclusion and building on abilities.. Having my child attend Parkview has been such a blessing, she is happy to go to school and becoming confident in her abilities. IF she were in a "special" class of 20 to 30 students in a school of over a thousand she would feel that she were segregated/different from her peers... At Parkview she fits in. The kids that attend Parkview need Parkview. If it is not broken do not try to fix it! We need to save this programming in it's entirety.

Parkview is not just a school but a community. It is a community of young people guiding each other into the future. A future that they will not have if Parkview is taken away from them.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact either one of us if you have any questions. We can be reached at

Eva and John Filinski (mother and father of Hannah Filinski)