



Marion Central School District Office

Dr. Ellen Lloyd
Superintendent
of Schools

Nikki Miller
Assistant Superintendent
of Instruction

Richard Walker
School Business
Administrator

David Wise
Director of Technology
and Innovative Programs

8.20.24

Dear Rockefeller Institute of Government;

As superintendent of Marion Central School District, I would like to ask the Rockefeller Institute to consider the following information about our District and the impact the Foundation Aid formula has on our students and school community.

Marion CSD Overview:

- WFL BOCES
- Northwestern Wayne County
- Enrollment: 664
- Pride ourselves on being “small but mighty”
- Regents performance highest in our County
- A community school & a hub for our community - We maintain many services and programming (mental health clinic, dental services, community food cupboard, tutoring, enrichment) through funding from a full service community schools grant.

The Foundation Aid formula was created to help provide an equitable education for all students. But,

- Currently we face a lot of inequity - experiences and opportunities for students in our District look drastically different from those even twenty minutes away.
- Like many rural districts, over 60% of Marion CSD’s funding comes from state aid.
- 2% tax levy raises \$150,000 for the District.
- Save Harmless piece of current formula has a huge impact on our District. If “save harmless” were to be removed based on the current Foundation Aid Formula, Marion CSD would lose over \$3,000,000 in Foundation Aid. For perspective, our overall budget is about 22 million.
- The only alternatives are to deplete reserves and make drastic cuts and this past budget cycle Marion CSD eliminated 27 positions, almost 15% of our staff.
- The current model is not sustainable for our small, rural district.



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The Foundation Aid formula needs to be updated to account for all the new educational requirements and factors such as:

- Social emotional and mental health needs of students and families
- Maintaining school as a hub and serving as an access point for families to community resources
- School Safety requirements
- Needs and costs for special education and English as a New Language students, as well as increased needs and costs for provision of Special Education services
- Inflation, increases in healthcare and other benefits costs, wage increases, increased costs for contracted services and supplies

One of our core values in Marion is “students are at the heart of what we do”. As a small, rural district, we ask that the new foundation aid formula is equitable and supports our rural students in a similar manner to their suburban and urban counterparts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ellen M. Lloyd