



## KIRYAS JOEL UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

48 Bakertown Road, Suite 401 Monroe, NY 10950 • (845) 782-2300 / Fax (845) 782-4176

JOEL PETLIN  
Superintendent of Schools

HARRY POLATSEK  
Board President

June 17, 2015

Tim Miller Associates  
10 North Street  
Cold Spring, NY 10516

Re: DGEIS and Annexation Petitions

Dear Mr. Miller,

As the representative of an interested agency, I carefully reviewed the DGEIS and I wholeheartedly agree with your analysis and conclusions relating to the educational impacts to the Kiryas Joel and Monroe Woodbury School Districts.

It has been clearly documented that the proposed annexation will have no impact on either School District, if the Monroe-Woodbury School District Board of Education will agree to an alteration of their school district boundaries, consistent with NYS Education Law Section 1507. For the sake of peace and harmony, on May 13, 2014 the Kiryas Joel School Board has already passed a resolution in support of the border alteration.

Much attention has been given to the East Ramapo Central School District in Rockland County, where Hasidic and Orthodox Jewish individuals control the Board of Education, and programs and services have been reduced over the years. Critics of the annexation petitions often cite the East Ramapo situation as the reason that the annexation should be rejected. Namely, they are concerned that the growth of the Hasidic population in the Monroe-Woodbury School District territory will ultimately lead to budget defeats and even a Board takeover.

What these critics fail to recognize is that the Hasidic population continues to grow in this area, with or without annexation. The DGEIS projects a total increase of 7,356 Hasidic people in 1,431 households over the next decade in the Monroe Woodbury School District without annexation. While I'm not advocating for annexation, it is clear to me that only with annexation will the Monroe-Woodbury Board be able to transfer the territory inhabited by the Hasidic residents (by approving an alteration of boundaries).

If annexation is voted down by the municipalities or the courts, it will ultimately have a negative impact on the Monroe-Woodbury School District. Through the changing demographics over the next decade, an additional 3000 Hasidic voters could have the potential to create a crisis in Monroe Woodbury that is comparable to East Ramapo. The only difference in these two situations is that if annexation occurs, the Monroe Woodbury Board could simply vote to alter their boundaries, transferring this population to the Kiryas Joel School District; a solution that is not available in East Ramapo.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
  
Joel Petlin  
Superintendent

Cc: Kiryas Joel Mayor Abraham Wieder  
Town of Monroe Supervisor Harley Doles