Attn: Plum School Board

Re: Act 34 Hearing (Regency Park Elementary)

Plum School Board,

My wife and I would like to voice our concern **against** the building of a new Regency Park school.  Despite living in the Regency Park zone, we do not believe a new school needs to be built in this area.  Our biggest concern is the cost of this school.  We are well aware of the financial struggles occurring in many school districts and Plum is not the exception.  We have noticed the elimination of programs and class electives occurring because of this.  Most notably for us, we noticed the elimination of the Computer class program for the elementary students this year.  We have also had discussions with other parents of high school students who have stated their children have multiple study halls every day due to a lack of electives to choose from.

We fear building a new school will only increase the need for more teacher, program, and elective cuts for the district. This will have ripple effective which will lead to lower quality of education for our children by not allowing students to pursue interests outside of their mandated courses. In turn, our school districts will be less desirable and property values will fall shortly thereafter.

We believe the school district can find a solution to this issue without building a new school.  We believe further redistricting to redistribute the Regency students throughout the other elementary schools makes the most sense.  Current class sizes are small enough for the other schools to take on the much smaller Regency student population with no effective on the quality of education our kids receive.

Also, building a new school will lead to larger than normal tax increases for multiple years, which will dissuade potential home buyers from moving to our area.  Plum’s property taxes are already high, and this will only continue to push away young families looking to move to our area.

We feel the decision to build a new school is not something that should be rushed into. Decisions should be based on facts and sound financial judgment. They should not be based on trying to appease a vocal minority.

We ask that you please reconsider the plan to build a new Regency, and help to return Plum’s education system to one that is highly sought after in Western Pennsylvania.

Thank you for your time.

Kirk and Denise Rhoades

639 Pikeview Drive

Plum, PA 15239