

**Testimony to the Independent Redistricting Commission Submitted on Behalf of:
Joanne Shelmidine, Ed. D., Superintendent of the New York Mills Union Free School
District**

November 23, 2021

Hello, my name is Joanne Shelmidine and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the New York Mills Union Free School District.

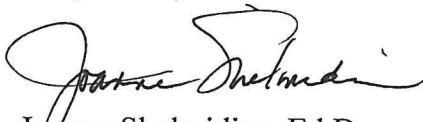
This school district represents approximately 600 students and covers areas in the Towns of New Hartford and Whitestown and the Villages of New York Mills and Yorkville. I write today to participate in New York's newly implemented independent redistricting process and the effects redistricting will have on our community.

As a community of interest we are focused on providing a solid public education to the students of our region. Maintaining the New York Mills Union Free School District within a single legislative district would ensure our elected leaders understand our issues and are focused on advocating for them at the state and federal level. The continuity of this legislative district is critical to the ability of our school board of education and me to provide services or receive assistance from our current representatives and would more broadly impact our ability to effectively lobby and advocate for decisions and policies that shape our public education system.

My community represents a diverse district, yet its residents share common interests. If my community was to be split up into different districts, our representation would be diminished and it would hinder the community's ability to come together. We believe that our current representation is fully committed to listening to our community's/group's concerns.

Thank you to the Independent Redistricting Commission for allowing me to submit testimony. I again ask that you consider the needs of my community so that there may continue to be adequate and fair representation.

Respectfully,



Joanne Shelmidine, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
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