

## What High School Kids?

My name is Amie Earls. I live in Monroe, Ohio and have three small children. I am writing to share my perspective on the upcoming Three Rivers School District levy, issue 9. I have nothing at stake with your upcoming levy and no connections to the school district, but as a parent of school age children, I felt the need to shed some light on what it is really like to have small children attending a K-12 campus setting.

In 2006, my husband and I struggled with the decision on whether or not to move to Monroe from our hometown of Middletown. We really wanted to come to Monroe because of the wonderful things we had heard and discovered through extensive research about the Monroe School District. But, we still struggled with the decision. We were worried and unsettled about the fact that our young children (one of them being a kindergartener at the time) would be in the same building with seniors in high school. We had seen building plans and pictures, but we were still not convinced. It was not until we scheduled a visit to the school, that we had complete and total peace about our children attending school on such a campus. I still remember the day we drove up the hill to the k-12 campus, I immediately felt nervous and had a hard time picturing my little kindergartener attending such a massive school. But, once inside, my mind changed instantly. A secretary, in an open and bright entry, that was safe and secure, welcomed me. Walking down the hallway to the kindergarten rooms, the building felt quaint and charming. The natural light that flooded the hallways, the student artwork that hung on the walls and the sounds of happy “little” voices was the comfort that I needed. But being a skeptic, I was looking, searching like a detective for the “big” kids. They were nowhere to be found. They were on the other side of the massive building, separated by a steel door and a lot of space. I was shocked at how much one building could feel like two separate buildings. With the older students coming and leaving school, at completely different times and there being little to no interaction during the day, I am sure that a lot of the younger children don’t even realize that they share their building with older students. When thinking about writing this letter, I consulted my third grader. I asked “What do you think about the high school kids at your school?” She responded, “What high school kids?”

I hope our perspective helps!

The Earls Family from Monroe