

Dear Karen Endress, Bainbridge Zoning Inspector:

I am writing to express my family's concern around the actions the City of Bainbridge has taken to effectively close the Chagrin Valley School resource center located on Kelly's Working Well Farm.

My family has enjoyed this incredible community resource since Kelly and her husband Bill first opened the farm years ago. Over the last 18 months, our daughter Malena has been a student at Chagrin Valley School and it has been nothing short of incredible to see her grow and thrive as a result. This program is a rare gem - Bainbridge is one of just a few cities nationwide offer this type of resource today. With a small but growing number of democratic schooling programs that take place on a farm across the United States, KWWF stands as a national model that any city should be proud to have.

That is why the recent actions the city has taken have been so inexplicable to us. We are extremely upset by the aggressively gratuitous actions that were taken to shut down the school. What was the goal behind loading a bunch of children into ambulances to wait for parents, to visibly intimidate and frighten them? The farm has always been a safe, joy-filled space for these kids. This was a very traumatic event for all involved and your actions had significant negative consequences for all of our families. As a result, there have been many unwelcome and unexpected hurdles to navigate.

In all meetings with parents; Kelly and her team have repeatedly shown a willingness to work toward making changes to meet your and Mr. Lovell's concerns *if shown a clear path forward due to the unique needs of this program*. The very essence of this program is that it takes place on a working farm; and it does not meet the city's definition of a school.

Surely the unique circumstances, in combination with the exquisite opportunity to build something truly incredible and special for our community, warrants an exceptional path forward? You already have a huge group of parents and willing community members standing by, ready to support the cause here. I urge you to find a way forward that embraces and lifts up the opportunity this moment presents.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Galvez