Dear Editor,

The Sibley County Public Health Department has been protecting the residents of Sibley County for decades through a strong partnership with Meeker and McLeod Counties. MN Statute 145A puts requirements in place for Community Health Boards (CHBs), which are required to perform certain functions and services of public health in order to assure health and safety of Minnesota residents. In 1980, the County Board members of Meeker, McLeod and Sibley entered into a joint powers agreement forming Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Community Health Services (CHS). A delegation agreement was put into place that delegates duties from the CHS to member counties. Basically, this means money comes into the CHS and then is allocated to each of the counties.

Over the years, there have been significant budget cuts to public health funding, as well as revisions to MN Statute 145A requiring more work and reporting of CHBs. Over the past decade Sibley County Public Health Department has dwindled to a few nurses and public health professionals. Because of this decline in staff, several programs are no longer offered i.e. School Health and Home Care to name a couple. To address the issues of less funding and more work, staff in Meeker, McLeod, Sibley started to work together in order to be more efficient and cost effective.

The grants and the majority of funding sources are integrated as a three county, but counties still hire staff independently to complete duties and responsibilities.

On Oct 12th, 2017 the CHB had an opportunity to save money and increase public health services to the residents of Sibley County and would create a stronger infrastructure for years to come.

Staff would have been restructured allowing staff to offer more WIC clinic hours, offer more home visits, offer more car seat appointments, and other services. Face to face services at the individual counties will not change and will in fact be increased. Also, county commissioners have used the term “integration” when stating “this has already been done with our Public Health and Human Services,” however, it was a merge between Public Health and Human Services whereas clerical and fiscal are shared. Full integration between departments cannot be done, because the two are not interchangeable. We cannot have social workers doing nursing duties and vice versa.

While the governing authority for public health programs and services is already with the CHB, the joint powers agreement requires individual county approval if there is a monetary contribution to the CHB.

If full integration does not happen, Meeker and McLeod counties will no longer provide staff to fill gaps at Sibley County. I urge you to contact your county commissioners and support integration. This is a win-win for our county.

Sincerely,
Jane Bruns

SE Elementary & Immanuel School Menus
Nov. 13 - 17
School Menus
Nov. 13 - 17

**SE BREAKFAST**
Monday - Breakfast turkey sausage pizza, Golden Graham, Tuesday - Clini-mini French toast bites, blueberry muffin
Wednesday - Pancakes, Cocoa Puffs
Thursday - Blueberry Bash waffles, double chocolate chip muffin
Friday - Turkey sausage pancake, mini cinnamon

**SE LUNCH**
Monday - BBQ pork sandwich, turkey and cheese sandwich
Tuesday - Italian meat spaghetti sauce, ham & American cheese sandwich
Wednesday - Chicken nuggets, ham & cheddar cheese salad
Thursday - Seasoned beef taco meat, strawberry parfait with granola
Friday - Toasty cheese sandwich, nachos

**IMMANUEL**
Monday - Chicken rice soup, crackers, broccoli, apples, butter jelly sandwich
Tuesday - Spaghetti, lettuce/spinach, green beans, banana, garlic bread
Wednesday - Turkey gravy, mashed potatoes, corn, apple crisp, butter jelly sandwich
Thursday - Macaroni & cheese, hot dogs, peas, cole slaw, pineapple, butter jelly sandwich
Friday - Pizza burger, bun, carrots, cuties, plain bread *Cookie Day*

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**PRINT**

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dies and responsibilities.

On Oct 12th, 2017 the CHB had an opportunity to save money and increase public health services for county residents by “fully integrating,” which would have meant terminating the delegation agreement for the counties. By terminating the county delegation agreements, staff within the three counties would have been restructured and would have eliminated the need for counties to hire additional staff. Sibley County board members voted against integration and moved towards delegation, which resulted in deadlock among the three county boards. Now a sub-committee has been formed to look into how this will lay out for the future. Sibley County cannot, with its current staff provide services to its constituents mandated by the state in accordance with State of Minnesota statute 145A. Without integration Sibley County will need to hire more staff to fulfill this obligation. By fully integrating Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Community Health Services, this would have allowed us to be more efficient in delivering pub-