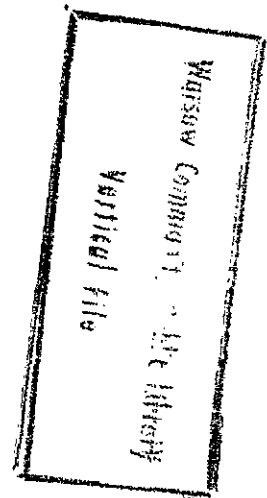


# KOSCIUSKO COUNTY SCHOOL CLOTHING BANK

No  
Records

IS THERE A NEED?



By: Sandra Neal  
Jill DeBatty

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**KOSCIUSKO COUNTY SCHOOL CLOTHING BANK  
IS THERE A NEED?**

**WHAT WOULD IT DO?**

*It would enable school age children to obtain decent used/ new clothing items at no cost for school wear.*

**WHO WOULD IT SERVE?**

*Initially, any child in the Warsaw Community Elementary or Jr. High school system. Eventually, any child in the Kosciusko County school system.*

**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

*Principals from the schools may refer the child in need to the clothing bank by way of a voucher. Teachers may recommend to the principal a child in need for his referral. Vouchers are simple to use and pre-supplied. Simply fill in the child's name, parent name and address.*

**WHO OPERATES IT?**

*Volunteers from the community donate their time to stock the bank with clothing and others donate time to keep the bank open.*

**HOW IS IT FUNDED?**

*Fund drives are held to purchase the new items (underwear, sneakers, socks.) Local clubs and civic organizations will be solicited for funds. Used clothing is donated by area families.*

**WHERE IS IT LOCATED?**

*To help defray costs, and provide accessibility, we prefer a location inside a local school.*

**WHEN IS IT OPEN?**

*Only during the school year. Two days a week for two hours a day for pick ups from August to December. Then one day a week only from January to May. An additional two hours is scheduled for a different day for receiving donated clothing.*

## **SUMMARY**

*Children walking to school in December wearing short pants.*

*Children wearing thin spring jackets in below zero weather.*

*Children with torn, worn out tennis shoes, and no socks in the pouring rain.*

*These are our children, those of our community schools. No matter what the reason is for why they are clothed in this manner, they do exist. They are in our schools and towns. This project is about these children and our responsibility to try to do something to change the circumstances.*

*Who are these children? County statistics would tell us that they are most likely part of the 3,500 people who receive some type of governmental assistance in Kosciusko County. Or they may be part of the 1,700 who receive help from Combined Community Services who do not receive any assistance. These are those we would refer to as the working poor, such as the mother earning minimum wage trying to raise two children.*

*In an attempt to alleviate the situation, two K.L.A. members, Jill DeBatty and Sandra Neal decided to start a program in Kosciusko County similar to one they had knowledge of in Delaware County. The Delaware County program had been in operation in one form or another for over 20 years. The system was simple, the principal of the student's school identified the need and provided the child with a pre-supplied voucher from the clothing bank. The voucher could then be exchanged for the needed articles at the clothing bank location. Parents were not subjected to an earnings evaluation since referrals came directly from the school principal.*

*The process began with phone calls to area principals to determine if the need truly existed. Local principals often stated that they had a definite need, with some schools trying to maintain their own clothing bank. A presentation was then made to the Warsaw Elementary School principals meeting, to determine the level of interest and confirmed needs. After the meeting, it appeared that many schools had a need level of approximately 20%.*

*With the need level being so high, the next step indicated the necessity for a sponsoring organization. This organization would be responsible for the actual operation of the clothing bank. After much consideration, the Kosciusko County Extension Homemakers*

*were approached. The proposal was presented first to the Board of Directors. The board gave approval to take the proposal to the area President's monthly meeting to allow the individual club presidents to hear details of the program. The proposal was presented to the 43 club presidents who then took the matter back to their individual clubs for acceptance or rejection. When the tally was finalized, the proposal was rejected.*

*Contact with Combined Community Services Director, Martha Courtney provided an opportunity to combine the School Clothing Bank concept with the C.C.S. clothing program. However, C.C.S. did not currently have enough operating space for their needs, let alone additional space to house the School Clothing Bank as well.*

*In an attempt to keep the project moving forward, a decision was made to approach the Warsaw Community Schools Superintendent, Lee Harman, to see if there was available space in one of the local schools to house the project. After meeting personally with Dr. Harman, he agreed to take the written proposal to the elementary principal's meeting to see if there was a school willing to participate and house the project. A copy of Dr. Harman's response which indicated the schools would not be participating, may be found in this report.*

*Although the project does not have committed support at this time, it is hopeful that a future K.L.A. class or community organization will be able to bring it to fruition. It is obvious that the need exists. The barrier is support. If you are interested in seeing this project go forth, please call one of the project's coordinators, Jill DeBatty, Personnel Officer for First National Bank, 267-9602, or Sandra Neal, Vice-President of Development and Public Relations for Cardinal Center, Inc., 267-3823.*

## *FUTURE NEEDS*

*In order to accomplish a Kosciusko County School Clothing Bank, the following issues would need to be resolved.*

*\* Identification of a sponsoring organization:*

*Local group or organization*

*"Umbrella" under an existing 501(c)(3)*

*Creation of a new 501(c)(3) with a volunteer board of directors*

*\* Community Support:*

*Clothing donations*

*Cash donations for new purchases and overhead*

*\* Volunteers:*

*Operational assistance*

*Fund Raising*

*\* Location:*

*Centrally located and accessible to families*

# Cardinal Center INC

504 NORTH BAY DRIVE WARSAW, INDIANA 46580  
219-267-3823

March 12, 1994

*Dr. Lee Harman  
Superintendent Warsaw Community Schools  
Warsaw, In. 46580*

*Dear Dr. Harman,*

*I am enclosing some basic information about the KLA project which Jill DeBatty and I am attempting. We realize that this may seem to be a formidable task, and not quickly accomplished, however, we both think it needs to be addressed.*

*Thank you for your offer to approach the principals with this topic. Please keep in mind that if there is no one at this time who is willing to participate by donating space for the '94 - '95 school year, that we would still appreciate being kept in mind for future space for the '95 - '96 school year. Ultimately this project may not be accomplished in the time frame originally hoped for, however even to plan for a 1995 opening would be better than not operating at all.*

*Once again, thank you for your time and assistance, Jill and I remain committed to the children of our community.*



*Sandra M. Neal  
Vice-President of Development & Public Relations  
Kosciusko Leadership Academy Member*

# WARSAW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

1 Administration Drive, P.O. Box 288, Warsaw, Indiana 46581-0288  
Phone Number: (219) 267-3238 Fax Number: (219) 267-5084

March 16, 1994

Sandra M. Neal  
Vice-President of Development & Public Relations  
Cardinal Center, Inc.  
504 North Bay Drive  
Warsaw, Indiana 46580

Dear Sandra:

Thank you for your letter of March 12 and the information which you provided in respect to the Clothing Bank. I presented this information to the elementary principals at their meeting on March 15. At that time the decision was made to decline your request for space within one of our schools for the Clothing Bank.

This issue is a sensitive one for us for a number of reasons. You and Jill obviously have our students in mind and we commend you for your desire to be of assistance to them. We do not like to find ourselves in a position where we may be an obstacle to efforts to serve kids. However, in this case there are a number of mitigating factors which make it difficult for us to be involved.

We are uncomfortable with the project being housed in our schools because of an overriding concern that the operation of the Bank would take time away from the normal school function. We understand your sensitivity to this and we know that you would work to limit this as much as possible. But in a practical sense, we feel that we simply cannot escape the fact that there will be times when volunteers would not be in the building and needs would still have to be addressed.

Another concern is the voucher system itself. All principals can relate experiences where efforts to help someone we consider to be in need have met with criticism from parents who were offended by our actions. In other cases, people have experienced displeasure because they were not helped in a similar fashion. Our principals expressed today that they feel that they are able to meet the immediate needs of their students now with the help of private donations and outside organizations.

The consensus of the group is that while the Bank is a worthy idea, the best place for the bank would be in an agency outside the school such as Combined Community Services or a church. We feel strongly that inevitably, if the program were housed in one of our schools, it would become that school's program. We are reluctant to except that responsibility due to the multitude of other responsibilities that we deal with on a daily basis.

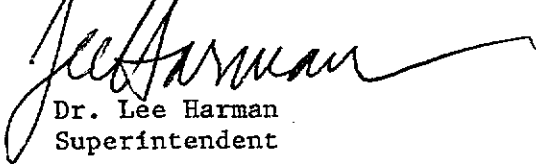
*"A Total Community Making A Difference"*



Sandra M. Neal  
Vice-President of Development & Public Relations  
Cardinal Center, Inc.  
Warsaw, IN 46580  
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We would like to again thank you for your efforts and your interest on behalf of students. Best wishes as you continue to search for ways to make your project a reality.

Sincerely,



Dr. Lee Harman  
Superintendent

LH:bc

pc: Elementary principals

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