

# Parents urged to join the fight and save St Guthlac

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PARENTS in Crowland are being urged to support the town's secondary school by sending their children there, or facing losing it forever.

The call comes from campaigners who are striving to save the St Guthlac School, which will shut if the George Farmer Technology and Language College in Holbeach successfully transforms into an academy.

Lincolnshire County Council originally said the George Farmer had been successful in its bid but the new coalition Government pulled the plug on the funding.

The school will bid again and that, coupled with gloomy statements from county education bosses, has left campaigners in fear that it is only a matter of time before the axe falls on their school for good.

Campaign leader Jim Astill has recently collected in petitions placed across the town - which attracted a final total of 1,299 signatures.

That petition will be checked before being handed over to Lincolnshire County



**Fight continues: Campaigners want to keep Crowland's St Guthlac School open.**

Council and the school's governing body - which it shares with the George Farmer since the two schools are federated.

Jim and fellow campaigner Paul Pryszlak recently met with federation executive head Steve Baragwanath and chair of governors Chris Penney

He said: "It is clear from the meeting, and the reports in Spalding Guardian that they are keen to press ahead with another Academy bid even though the initial funding was subject to review."

"Our position remains the same, we will continue our efforts to save the school. It is clear from our meeting

with Steve and Chris that reducing numbers at St Guthlac's present financial challenges, which means the school is not safe under any circumstances.

"We would therefore ask that those parents in the local community who are looking for a secondary school for their children for

September 2011 that they opt for St Guthlac's over other schools.

"Unfortunately if people continue to boycott the school, because of fear of closure or for other issues, it will make the job of saving the school more difficult."

Figures show about 46 per cent of children leaving South View Primary School in Crowland this year will not go to go to the St Guthlac, with a third heading for The Deepings School.

In both 2007 and 2008 the majority of leavers did not go to the St Guthlac (see figures below).

A letter from the county director of children's services Peter Duxbury to John Hayes, posted on the campaign team's Facebook page, points to this trend as a reason for the school's possible demise.

Mr Duxbury wrote: "Sadly too many people living in Crowland choose other secondary schools and the school has become financially unviable."

Campaigners say this contradicts previous promises for a "consultation" on the closure, which the council said was simply a "proposal" at this stage.