

MINUTES OF BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES WORK SESSION
JUNE 17, 2019

The Board of School Trustees met in a work session on Monday, June 17, 2019, at the Education Support Center. The following members were present: Mrs. Elizabeth Galligan, President; Mrs. Jenny Higbie, Vice-President; Mrs. Elaine Murphy, Secretary; Mr. Joseph L. Brown, Member; Mrs. Donna Corbett, Member; Mrs. Rebecca Gardenour, Member; and Mrs. Lee Ann Wiseheart, Member. Also present were the following administrators: Dr. Brad Snyder, Superintendent; and Mr. Bill Briscoe, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administration and Operations.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Mrs. Galligan called the work session to order at 7:20 p.m.

B. PRESCHOOL:

Mr. Duffy reported that currently housed at Children's Academy of New Albany we have four special needs preschool classes and Head Start uses ten additional classrooms. Head Start has received a \$1.7 million grant to provide services for 80 additional students – 40 center-based and 40 home-based. They are looking for a building to house their full program and have asked for six additional classrooms at Children's Academy. With our program housed there also, we currently only have three classrooms available.

On May 1, the central office administrative team met to discuss pros and cons of selling or leasing the building to Head Start and moving our special needs preschool classes to Slate Run, Georgetown, and/or S. Ellen Jones as these three buildings have extra classroom space. Mrs. Ferree shared that currently we have approximately 40 students who live in the county in the program and are bussed in to Children's Academy. Those students could be serviced at Georgetown. On May 22, Mr. Duffy met with the Head Start staff to discuss next steps and shared with them he would have to discuss and get final approval from Board of School Trustees.

Mr. Wiseheart shared that the building has not had major renovation since 1980. The building is structurally sound; however, does need door replacements, skylights repaired, carpet replacements, etc. and these immediate needs could cost up to \$500,000. If we move our special needs preschool program from the building, we would save approximately \$300,000-\$360,000 in staff reductions, utility costs, maintenance costs, and technology costs. Mrs. Corson said food services does have openings at other buildings; therefore, there is a good chance those employees would be placed at other sites. Mrs. Geradine Schultze will continue to oversee the program whether that be at different sites or at one location.

Dr. Snyder said if we do not sell the building, some day soon the school corporation will need to invest money in this building. For that reason, he would like to explore selling the building to Head Start rather than leasing.

Mrs. Murphy asked the number of students currently in the program who would be moving. Mrs. Ferree said they will have approximately 80 preschool students to start the year; however, throughout the school year that number grows to over 200. Mrs. Murphy added she is concerned that if we move the program to other buildings and space is needed in the future at those buildings for K-4 student programs then the preschool would have to move again. She would like a permanent "home" for them. Mrs. Ferree said she likes the idea of having an Early Learning Center, but she also likes having the older students in the building with the preschoolers to read to them, etc. Mr. Duffy added we have a preschool program at Green Valley and he would like to have a preschool in each building in the future. Mrs. Corbett said she too likes the idea of the preschool students attending the school they will be "growing up in."

Mrs. Gardenour asked if an appraisal would have to be done of the entire site or could we sell them what they need at a fair, reasonable price and sell the large area facing State Street separately. Mrs. Galligan said she agrees looking at selling the front part separately is a good idea.

Mrs. Wiseheart said she is not in favor of selling the building. She hopes to one day have a preschool program in the school system due to the high need in that area and would like to have the building available for that use. She asked what, in general, is the corporation's plan with facilities in the long term. Dr. Snyder said he is not comfortable with a middle school of 1,750 students for many reasons. Also, need to look at the ASC / ESC campus. Mrs. Wiseheart said she is in favor of leasing to Head Start and then conduct a demographic study to reveal if selling is best. Dr. Snyder added that if we do lease, the school corporation is responsible for the upkeep/maintenance of the building until we do sell.

Mr. Brown asked what the terms of the lease would be. Dr. Snyder said Head Start has to go through “hoops” with the federal government to get money which could take a while. Also, if we do decide to sell, we have to put on a list and give charter schools an opportunity to buy. Mr. Brown said he is willing to work with Head Start to provide the best solution collectively to provide preschool to all students in the county now and in the future. Fellow board members agreed.

C. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business to be brought before the Board, the work session was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Schindler, Recording Secretary