



ANTHONY WAYNE SCHOOLS

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February 24, 2010 Community Focus Group Provides Much Needed Input

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One year ago, Anthony Wayne Local Schools hosted a community focus group to gather input on a variety of topics concerning the district. After putting that information to good use over the past year, the district reconvened the group of elected officials, parents, and local business people on Wednesday, February 24, to gather input about future facilities needs for the district. Despite the struggling economy and housing market, Anthony Wayne Local Schools has gained approximately 45 new students over the course of the school year. This growth, coupled with State mandates for specific class size restrictions, and all-day, everyday kindergarten, has caused the Board of Education and district administrators to once again focus on future facility needs. The community focus group was asked 26 questions regarding current facilities, future facilities needs and preferences, and the potential for community support of a future bond issue to build new facilities.

The responses gained from the community focus group were very telling. The results show that many people understand the need for additional classroom space, however they do not feel the economy has recovered enough for the community to support a tax increase for new facilities. 84% of the group supported the idea of keeping the high school and its athletic and extra-curricular facilities at their current location and building a new junior high school (housing grades 6-8) at the Bucher Road site. This idea would allow for grade level adjustment across the district. Monclova, Waterville, and Whitehouse would house K-5 students, and Fallen Timbers Middle School would be converted to an additional centralized K-5 building. This plan would eliminate one of the transitions students must make under the current building organization, while allowing the district to maximize its current space and build just one new building. The cost of a new junior high school would be substantially lower than that of a new high school, however some re-districting of students would be required. Re-locating grades 6-8 in a new junior high school at the Bucher Road site would also alleviate some of the traffic congestion on Finzel Road each morning and afternoon during the school year. The additional space would be used for all-day everyday kindergarten as well as to house additional students moving into the district.

The Anthony Wayne Local Schools Board of Education will carefully review all of the input gathered from the community focus group and refer to this information as they discuss facilities needs for the future. Attached are the questions and responses from the February 24 community focus group meeting to this message. Parents and community members are encouraged to take a look at the results. After completing recent tours of all of our school buildings, it is apparent that all of our classroom spaces are full. Our goal is to have a plan in place to meet the State mandates and enrollment increases without using temporary or modular classrooms. 77% of the community focus group members were not in favor of purchasing modular classroom spaces. The Board of Education will continue to seek input from the community on this and other issues facing the district. As always, our goal is to provide the best educational opportunities for students in a safe and secure environment, while being fiscally responsible with all of our revenue. Thank you for your continued support of Anthony Wayne Local Schools.

Dr. John Granger



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