



MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – SPECIAL MEETING Public Hearing on Proposed Closure of Thomson Early Childhood Center Wednesday, March 29, 2006 Kohlwes Education Center, 6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Al Talley. The Board and audience recited the pledge of allegiance to the flag. President Talley announced that the meeting was being audio-tape recorded.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Al Talley, President
Lynn Desmarais, Vice President
Marcie Maxwell
David Merrill
Joy Poff

Dr. Dolores Gibbons, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board of Directors

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

President Talley stated the purpose of the public hearing is to allow any interested parties to ask any questions they may have about the proposal to close Thomson Early Childhood Center. There will not be any action taken at the public hearing.

DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THOMSON EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Superintendent Gibbons remarked the closure of a school is a difficult decision. She explained to the audience there have been three separate study sessions to discuss the possible closure of Thomson Early Childhood Center. It has been a potential consideration for several years. The building was built in 1949 and has served the District well. If the proposal is approved, kindergarten students in 2006 will be served by their neighborhood schools. The proposed enrollment projections indicate the affected schools have available space. Remodel or renovation is not an option at Thomson as new school standards would require more land than is available. The property, however, has the potential to resolve a serious challenge for the district. With the overcrowding of the "bus barn," this is an opportunity to move the maintenance, capital projects, security and operations offices to a new site on the Thomson property and allow the busses and transportation operation to have more room to maneuver at the current property on N. 4th St.

The current playfields at Thomson would be maintained and a new park would be built for the neighborhood. This proposal also closes Honey Dew Elementary for one year and allows that building renovation project to move ahead of schedule a year and be available in the fall of 2007/08.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/
COMMENTS

Two neighborhood parents asked if full-day kindergarten would still be available with the closure of Thomson Early Childhood Center. Associate Superintendent Risdon responded that it will be available at Bryn Mawr on a first-come, first-served basis, just as it is now. Transportation will be offered from Lakeridge and Campbell Hill to Bryn Mawr for full-day students. Ms. Risdon stated kindergarten round-ups will be coordinated to invite the complete West Hill area parents.

Dr. Gibbons indicated the 2004-2005 proposed slight boundary changes have been postponed until the full "build-out" of the new large apartment complex on Martin Luther King Way is determined.

A parent thanked the board for bringing the kindergarten students back to their home schools.

Board Director Poff encouraged the audience to feel free to call any board member if they had additional questions prior to action being taken at the April 5, 2006 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, at 6:37 p.m., Maxwell moved and Poff seconded to adjourn the special public hearing. Vote 5-0.

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Secretary	President
_____	_____
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