

UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT #377.

**CALENDAR
ITEMS:**

- **Community Forum** to be held July 8th, 7:00 PM at the HS auditorium
- **Enrollment** scheduled for July 31st and August 1st
- **\$19.89 Million Bond election** set for August 5th
- **Teachers report** August 8th
- **School starts** August 13th for 5th & 9th graders
- **First day of school** for all students, August 14th

Superintendent's Email news group—If you would like to get regular school news updates, signup to join the Superintendent's email newsgroup by emailing Mr. Wiseman at:

wisemans@usd377.org

Join our team—become a school volunteer. Persons interested should contact the central office at 913-833-5050

Atchison County Community Schools - Special Summer Edition

“Where Success is Measured One Student at a Time”

Community Forum Set to Address School Topics - Elementary Classroom Seating Capacities, Bus Guidelines, 2008-09 Budget, Sports Complex, Bond Election, etc.

By Superintendent Wiseman

A community forum for USD 377 parents and interested patrons will be held on Tuesday, July 8, 2008, in the ACCHS auditorium. The purpose of the forum is to provide an opportunity for parents and patrons to become informed on major issues and initiatives being considered by the district. There will also be time allotted for questions from the public. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM.

Items to be discussed:

Elementary seating capacity limits based on classroom space guidelines—The intent here is to establish elementary capacity standards that support the promotion of quality learning

environments. Part of that process will be to establish priorities for how students are assigned to each elementary.

Align busing priorities with capacity limits—As we look to bring greater balance in enrollment between the three elementary centers, there will be the need to establish new bus routes and transportation guidelines. Those guidelines are being developed to reduce time spent riding the bus to and from school. One of the measures being considered is pickup pools for in-town students.

2008-2009 Budget issues—Rising costs for health insurance, transportation, energy, and food service are concerns for the upcoming school year. A brief look at

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What's Changed in the Upcoming Bond Election Compared to the Last Election

Listed below are changes between the bond election held last November and the upcoming election on August 5th:

- The most obvious difference is the cost increase of nearly half a million dollars from \$19.43 million to \$19.89 million.
- With that increase comes two less classrooms (approximately 3000 square feet less space).
- The high school would not be remodel-

ed using bond proceeds. Any remodeling would have to be funded through the district's capital outlay fund.

- The central office will not be relocated to the middle school, where the lunchroom would have been converted into office space for the district copy center, shipping and receiving, and central office personnel.

(Bond election information continued on page 3)



The state will pay 28% or \$5.56 million, plus corresponding interest!

Why now?

The district has critical facilities needs that must be addressed

Every year we wait construction costs continue to increase

The state will pay 28%

For our children, our community and the future of our schools

Voter Information:

The deadline to register for the August 5, 2008 primary election is July 21, 2008.

To register, pick up a form at the County Courthouse or the USD 377 Central Office

Or go online to www.atchisoncountyks.org

Bond Election Set for August 5th

On August 5th, 2008, Atchison County Community School District residents will vote on a \$19.89 million school bond issue.

The outcome of that election will either set the course for the next thirty years and beyond or send the board back to square one, knowing full well the challenges that lie ahead.

The bond issue (if passed)

will provide a new comprehensive PreK-8 building designed to:

- Provide quality learning environments
- Equalize learning opportunities for all students
- Reduce cost inefficiencies
- Provide safe drop-off and pickup zones
- Support technology learning standards
- Provide quality air systems and energy controls
- Give students more academic opportunities
- Provide 21st century instructional settings
- Support and promote academic excellence for all students
- Support the district's Wellness Plan
- Support the district's Bullying plan

What's in the bond package?

New PreK-8 School that includes:

- PreK-4 Elementary wing
- Middle School (5-8) wing
- Modern science labs designed to meet state & district learning standards
- 21st century classrooms designed for research based teaching & learning
- Separate physical education areas for MS & ES students
- Major renovations and upgrades to the high school kitchen in order to serve 700+ students each day
- Separate eating areas for HS, MS & ES students
- Storm shelter protection & safe rooms
- Controlled access security systems
- Technology labs for elementary students
- Furnishings & equipment totaling over \$900,000
- Natural lighting design that promotes student achievement
- Relocation of the bus garage to

allow room for new PreK-8 building

- Handicap accessibility and fully ADA compliant building

How much will homeowners pay?

\$19.89 million bond issue

Financed over 30 years at 5.05%, 28% state aid, with an annualized assessed valuation growth of 3%

<u>Home Value</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>	<u>Monthly Cost</u>
\$50,000	\$89.13	\$7.43
\$75,000	\$133.69	\$11.14
\$100,000	\$178.25	\$14.85

USD 377's mill levy has averaged 30.9 mills over the past 17 years.

"Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better."
—Pat Riley

Community Forum continued from page 1...

the 2008-2009 budget will be given.

Sports Complex Update—An update on the progress of the new sports complex will be given, with information on what the county-wide sales tax will pay for and what will need to be funded either by the district or through other funding sources.

August 5th Bond Election—No formal presentation will be given, but patrons will have the opportunity to ask questions pertaining to the August 5th bond election.

“No matter where a student attends school, they must have equal educational opportunity to learn based on the elements of the physical environment and thus, any shortfalls that may occur in the student’s learning process and their relationship to the learning environment are purely the result of the individual talents, temperaments, motivations, and convictions of the student.” (Franklin Hill, School Design, 2005)



Bond Election continued from page 1

The Challenges:

Providing quality, equitable academic programs and services to all students efficiently is our greatest challenge. Over the past three years, we have done a great job of raising proficiency rates and graduating students on time. Even so, every year gets harder and harder to meet the academic target goals for all subgroups. The accountability system we work under is real and the demand for excellence is at all levels of learning. It is very important for us to address these equity issues so that our schools do not become institutions where individual groups of students have it better than others. That can be quite difficult when you have been doing things for a certain way for many years. Regardless, we know it’s the right thing to do.

Added to this scenario is the increasing costs for health insurance, transportation, maintenance/upkeep, food service and salaries. The reality

is that every year we have to and reassess and realign our priorities as money continues to move from the classroom into other areas that seem to be in nothing but an upward spiral.

America is changing and schools have a responsibility to change as well. All students are expected to do well and NCLB is the mechanism designed to ensure that happens. Our school improvement initiatives and teaching strategies have to be supported by research based “best” practices. That research is used to guide our decision making process in how to best serve the needs of our students. Therefore, when people ask us why, the answer is simple—It’s what’s best for all students.

Frequently asked questions:

Will elementary students mix with middle school and/or high school students?

- The new building will be designed to section off students according to grade level.
- The most recent design separates students according to the following: PreK-4, Grades 5-8 and grades 9-12.
- Bus routes will continue to assign students according to grade level, even though all grade levels will continue to ride together.
- Elementary students will eat lunch separate from middle school students. High school students will continue to eat in the HS commons.

Equity & Efficiency - The one underlying theme of the feasibility study was the emphasis on equity and efficiency. The Facilities Committee believed it was imperative that the district provide all students with equal opportunities to district

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Superintendent's Notes

All teaching vacancies for 2008-2009 have been filled. It's great when you are able to fill all your teaching vacancies. It's even better when you can fill the vacancies with high-quality teachers and that is exactly what we have been able to do. I expect that this upcoming school year will be one of our best in a long time.

Academic excellence continues to be our number one goal and it appears that our students have once again performed very well on annual state assessments. Early reports are that we will equal if not exceed our twelve (12) standards of excellence awards that we earned last year. The state will not release official results until sometime next fall.

The district has been awarded KAN-ED grant in the amount of \$18,404. The KAN-ED money will be used to purchase and install a new Interactive Distance Learning Lab at the high school. The lab will allow students and staff to participate in real-time high definition interactive video sessions. This is an exciting new venture that USD 377, Keystone Learning Services, JCN, McLouth and Perry LeCompton will all be working together on this coming school year. The new lab includes two 50" high definition monitors that will allow us to view and transmit video/audio over the Internet.

Kazakhstan teachers will visit USD 377 next fall. High school social studies instructor, Clayton Lucas and middle school social studies instructor, Renee Potter will be going to Washington D.C. this summer as part of a Civics Mosaic Program sponsored by a U.S. Department of Education grant in coordination with K-State. The program partners with Kazakhstan teachers as part of an international civics program. This coming fall teachers from Kazakhstan will be visiting our district for a few days to observe and learn. They will also even get to teach a few classes while they are here.

Stephen E. Wiseman,
Superintendent

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resources and academic programs in the most efficient manner possible. It was the committee's determination that refurbishing did not solve any of the true underlying issues of equity & efficiency, but also believed that there were still too many issues left unresolved with maintenance and upkeep of old buildings.

What is the cost to refurbish all the buildings and why is that not the best solution?

The final estimated cost to refurbish each of the main attendance centers was approximately \$12 million, which in today's dollars is right at \$13 million. That was considered too expensive a solution for a plan that incorporated keeping old buildings and did not completely address equity or efficiency issues.

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