

March 25, 2021

**MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT FACILITIES PLAN HEARING REPORT**

A public hearing was held at the Marion County High School Cafeteria on March 23, 2021, at 6:00 PM (local time). The purpose of the public hearing was to propose District Facility Plan (DFP) #4A developed by the Marion County Board of Education. The Local Planning Committee (LPC) voted 19-1 in opposition of DFP #4A on May 7, 2019 and voted 12-7 in opposition on July 7, 2020 of DFP#4A. The MCBOE voted 3-2 to approve DFP #4A at the September 3, 2020 board meeting.

Twenty-nine (29) individuals attended the Public Hearing excluding the hearing officer. Michael Abell, Director of Student Safety and Support Services for Marion County, served as the locally-appointed hearing officer. Those attending the meeting included David Hibbard, Joyce Caldwell, Miranda Caldwell, Larry Caldwell, Paula Curtis, Charles Neal, Stevie Lowery, Scott Spalding, Troy Benningfield, Shelly Badgett, Traci Sharpe, Judy Bickett, Harold Gribbins, David Ford, Daniel Mattingly, Rita Spalding, George Spragens, Darrin Spalding, Greg Clark, Anne Courtney Caldwell, Tony Caldwell, Chris Brady, and Tim Lyons along with board members Joey Lee, Brad Cox, Peggy Downs, Carrie Truitt, and Jim Eubank. Superintendent Taylora Schlosser was also in attendance. Please note that Mr. Tim Lyons recorded the Public Hearing and the five (5) Board members who attended are not on the sign-in sheet.

COMMENTS

Michael Abell called the public hearing to order at 6:00 PM. The hearing officer outlined the purpose of the hearing and the hearing procedures in accordance with 702 KAR 1:001. It was explained that those persons wishing to speak would be given the opportunity and that written statements would be accepted. All considerations will be made available to the Kentucky Board of Education via the hearing officer's report. The hearing officer read the proposed new District Facility Plan which includes but is not limited to;

- Construction of a new Calvary Elementary School with a capacity of 350 students and common space to serve 400 students;
- Major renovations to Marion County Middle School to include partial roof replacement, replacing the stage floor and upgrading the HVAC water source heat pumps;
- Major renovation of Glasscock Elementary School to include renovating existing standard classrooms back to Art, Music and Computer classrooms, renovate existing Art/Music room back to FMD, replace HVAC water source heat pumps, A/C added to the gym and kitchen hood update;

- Major renovation of West Marion Elementary School to include an additional entrance, replace exterior walkways, improved drainage, additional restroom facilities, renovation of administration areas, HVAC update, kitchen hoods updated, construct exterior storage, and renovate existing Art room to two (2) Resource classrooms along with renovating existing Music room to Cafeteria space;
- Major renovation at Lebanon Elementary to include existing surplus classrooms to be Computer, Art, and Music classrooms, partial roof replacement to include gutters and downspouts, exterior wall repairs, interior doors, stair upgrades, site improvements, renovation of existing restrooms, MEP upgrades to include sanitary, water heaters, cooling towers, A/C units, along with renovation of one (1) standard classroom to expand the Administrative Area, one (1) classroom to become Preschool, two (2) classrooms to become Resource Rooms and two (2) classrooms to expand the library;
- Renovation to upgrade all existing facilities to meet most current safety requirements of the KY Building Code;
- Renovation to upgrade all existing facilities to meet most current handicapped accessibility requirements of KY Building Code;
- Additional renovations at the Marion County ATC and construction of non-educational additions that include an Auditorium at Marion County High School, enlarge the gymnasium at West Marion Elementary along with management support areas at Central Office and the Bus Garage.
- Discretionary Construction Projects at Marion County High School, renovations at the Knight Academy, and demolition of the Ray House.

Written statements from the following individuals were read into record;

- Jon Michael supporting renovation of Lebanon Elementary at its current location as he felt was promised with the passing of the nickel tax.
- Mary Cambron to save and renovate Lebanon Elementary due to its location.
- Missy Mattingly to keep Calvary Elementary as she felt was promised with the passing of the nickel tax.
- Chase Violette stating support of the DFP.
- Darin and Ida Spalding supporting the DFP and construction of a new Calvary and an upgrade to Lebanon Elementary.
- Miranda Caldwell supporting a new Calvary Elementary and Lebanon Elementary due to the benefits of small schools and felt that it was promised with the passing of the nickel tax.
- David Ford in support of the DFP due to the “immediate” needs of Lebanon and Calvary Elementary School and “concern” for other projects being considered.
- Mike Spalding supporting the current DFP.
- Holly Browning in opposition of the DFP due to the small enrollments currently, the fact it would save the district \$ in the long run in operating costs and that \$11 million is being spent on one school that serves the least number of students in the district. She also questioned if \$ would be available for renovations at the other schools listed on the DFP.

- Dee Dee Rakes in support of 4 elementary schools due to the concern of overcrowding as she had experienced when teaching in Taylor County.
- Bob and Jan Powers in support of maintaining all the elementary schools in the county based on the success Calvary has enjoyed and they feel it is best for our communities.
- Brandi Humphrey in support of Calvary Elementary having owned several different properties in the Calvary district to ensure her children could attend the school.
- Terri and Alice Graves to save Calvary Elementary as their family and siblings attended the school and would like to see their grandson go there next year.
- Wesley and Lindsey Bland expressing support to keep Calvary Elementary as his father and grandfather attended and the negative impact it would have on the community.
- Spencer, Robert and Lisa Bright supporting Calvary Elementary due to the positive impact it has on the community.
- Tony Caldwell in support of keeping Calvary open due to the impact on community and concern over a bigger elementary.
- Dot Caldwell in support of Calvary Elementary due to community support and traffic concerns in Lebanon a new school would create.
- Toni Grace Caldwell in support of Calvary due to it being a great school and the impact it has on the community.
- Erin Caldwell in support of Calvary due to impact on the community and concern with traffic and travel to Lebanon in the afternoons.
- Rachael Thompson in support of Calvary Elementary due to the accepting environment and impact on families.
- Louise Deep stating to vote against closing Calvary Elementary School.
- Christy Blandford in support of a new Calvary Elementary School and Lebanon Elementary being remodeled due to the impact of smaller learning environments and they felt it was part of passing the nickel tax.
- Jason Clark in support of Calvary Elementary and the four elementary system due to the impact on the community.
- MJ Clark to save Calvary School.
- Stephanie Lee to show support for keeping Calvary and Lebanon Elementary Schools open due to the importance of the elementary years to a child's education.
- Anne Courtney Caldwell in support of Calvary Elementary due to the impact on the community and concern regarding traffic with having 2 elementary schools so close together.
- LeAnne Huber in full support of keeping 4 elementary schools in our district.
- Joyce Caldwell stated that before the nickel tax facility needs were clearly outlined as Calvary and Lebanon Elementary but once money was available the needs increased and asked that we do what is right and stick to the plan of 4 elementary schools.
- Patsy Gribbins wrote in opposition to the DFP noting that change is not easy but sometime necessary. She supports the work of the Local Planning Committee and

feels their voices have been ignored by the current school board members. She encouraged a decision based on what is best for all students, not on emotion.

- Judy Bickett was in opposition of the DFP referencing the June 14, 2018 MCBOE Resolution to adopt a new District Facilities Planning Committee after the previous committee had deliberated for sixteen (16) months and not produced a DFP that was acceptable to the BOE for approval. The letter reviewed the agenda for the Orientation meeting on November 12, 2018 along with current bond payments and bonding potential. The letter listed the six (6) items the Marion County District Financer addressed with the committee. The committee continued to meet and felt the need to go to a three (3) elementary school model as evidenced by the majority vote always being well in excess of 50%. Ms. Bickett outlined her experience in the district and familiarity with LPC procedures, questioning that if the BOE can approve any plan they wish then why go through the process of a Local Planning Committee. Attachments in the letter included a copy of Resolution adopted by the MCBOE on June 14, 2018, a copy of current bonding capacity presented to the LPC for planning purposes and a list of LPC members with their positions designated.

The floor was then opened to those who wished to make a statement. Oral testimony was provided by the following individuals:

- Charles Neal, community member, asked to keep all kids in mind and presented concern about the impact on lower achieving students. He wanted to ensure equal opportunity and access to resources at all schools. He questioned if the board members were on the other side would they be content and asked they make the decision not just based on 2 or 3 kids.
- David Hibbard, teacher and volleyball coach at Marion County High School for 25 years, discussed how MCHS is continually in use during evenings and the summer for a variety of school and community events. He described issues they have experienced regarding leaking roofs and backed up sewers during his tenure along with the electrical infrastructure. He expressed concern over a lack of respect students had for the current facilities and commented on the pride his volleyball team had when their court was recently refinished. He felt a major renovation would only consist of half measures that will not meet student needs. He pointed out that all students in Marion County would eventually walk the halls of a new high school.
- Greg Clark, teacher at the Marion County ATC, stated he was not just for one school and commented about the rhetoric regarding which school is better or in greater need. He pointed out that students are the life blood of the community and was frustrated the process had become political. He wants what is best for all students.
- Larry Caldwell, community member, supported the nickel tax but it seems to him priorities have now changed. He discussed the condition of sewer systems and the current bonding potential. He understands Calvary is the smallest school and re-districting will be necessary. He feels the needs at MCHS have been addressed

with the most recent BG1. He did not want the DFP to become a wish list but to focus on what has to be addressed.

- Harold Gribbins, community member, discussed his experience with re-districting and the impact the closing of Bradfordsville High School had on the community. He stated his blame of the Superintendent at that time was misplaced and he now understands that difficult decision must be made at times. He voiced his opposition to the current DFP stating decisions should not be made based on property but should be about the kids.
- Darrin Spalding, community member and city council member since 2002, stated he never thought Lebanon Elementary would be closed. He felt another school on the opposite side of town would be wrong. He pointed out that MCHS is not the only facility with wiring issues and any construction or renovation would be designed with a 100-year lifespan.

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and when no one else took the opportunity to speak the Public Hearing was adjourned by Michal Abell at 7:55 PM.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that District Facility Plan #4A developed by the Marion County Board of Education and adopted by the Marion County Board of Education advance to the next stage of the District Facility Plan process.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Michael Abell
Marion Co. Board of Education
Director of Student Safety
and Physical Support Services

John Gilbert
KY Dept. of Education
Facilities Branch Project Manager

cc: Greg Dunbar, Manager of
District Facilities Branch

Attachments: Public Hearing Agenda
Marion County School
District Facility Plan