

Haywood County Schools
Board of Education
Public Hearing
Possible Closure of Central Elementary School

Public Questions / Board of Education Responses
January 28, 2016

1. Why Central Elementary School?

The consideration to close the school is not based upon Central Elementary School's capacity. It is based upon the overall decrease in enrollment in the school district, the need to reduce the local budget by 2.4 million dollars, and the proximity of neighboring schools that could accommodate the students and staff.

2. How many Central Elementary School students go to different Schools? Can students living in Central Elementary district be required to attend Central Elementary School?

Three (3) out-of-district students have been approved to attend CES this school year. Forty-four (44) students were approved in previous school years. This is a total of 47 out-of-district students approved to attend Central Elementary School.

Fifteen (15) students were approved to leave the CES district this school year. Fifty-one (51) students were approved to leave the Central Elementary School district in previous years. This is a total of 66 students whose parents requested and received a reassignment to another school.

The Board of Education School Assignment Policy 4150 is primarily designed to help parents across the school system with work related childcare hardships for young children. Currently, the parents of over 500 students across the district have requested and received out-of-district assignments. It would be impossible to deny out-of-district requests for people living in the Central Elementary School district and approve requests for 15 other schools. Changing the reassignment policy to eliminate all reassignment requests would create childcare and other hardships for over 500 students and their families across the district.

3. You've stated that the savings for closing Central Elementary would be \$500,000.00. The study, conducted by the Maintenance Department Director for the schools, states that the savings would be over the next 10 years. How does this help fix the budget shortfall of this coming year?

There are two different savings:

- 1. The \$520,000 (p. 5 of the study) is current local expense budget savings only. Nine positions are paid from local funds (lead teachers, two cafeteria, two custodians, media, principal, and two clerical) equates to \$345,000. Other expenditures include: school operations such as electricity \$105,000, cafeteria operation \$30,000, and supplies and technology \$40,000. The total annual local cost is \$520,000.*
- 2. The ten year savings of \$426,000 are additional capital outlay savings (p. 1 of study). The facility at CES was evaluated on January 8, 2016 by the Director of Maintenance. The report used is a facilities study mandated by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and conducted every five years. The facilities study was completed in January 2016.*

4. The study states the need for a new roof. Which roof would that be? The entire school has metal roofing and the Kindergarten/First grade building roof was just replaced this year.

The pre-kindergarten/kindergarten roof has been repaired several times. A new metal roof will need to be installed at a later date.

5. The study states the need for a washer and dryer. At the tune of \$5,000.00? Is this for a concrete slab to put under it because I don't know of any concrete company that wouldn't be willing to do it cheaper. Is it necessary?

The \$5,000.00 for a washer/dryer installation at CES is a conservative amount. Sewer and water hook-ups will have to be established and these are not readily available.

6. What happens when the Junaluska and Hazelwood reach their maximum capacity due to new children or people returning from the Charter school?

Junaluska's current enrollment is 336, the capacity is 552 and the facility's capacity is 60.87%. Hazelwood's current enrollment is 462, the capacity is 720 and the facility's capacity is 64.17%. Hazelwood can take 258 students and Junaluska 216 students for a combined 474 students. There would have to be a significant increase in district enrollment for these schools to reach their capacity.

7. You mentioned the cost of heating the building is not feasible, but isn't North Canton the same age of our building?

Central Elementary School's buildings were constructed in 1954 and 1976. North Canton Elementary buildings were constructed in 1967 and 1976.

- 8. The study states that a third party is interested in acquiring Central's building. Whom might that be? Why have there been architects at the school measuring? Is the school board planning on moving in since you've sold the old hospital building? Why not close the alternative learning school and move in there since it is next to where you hold board meetings?**

A third party, Thom Morgan, has expressed an interest on behalf of Haywood Christian Academy. This inquiry has not been pursued because the Board of Education has not closed the school. Architects visited Central Elementary School to confirm the condition of the facility and to validate the Maintenance Director's summary. No plans or arrangements have been made to relocate the Board of Education Central Office. The Board of Education is currently for sell by the county commissioners. If sold, the county commissioners would be required to relocate the Board of Education. In making the 2.4 million in cuts, the Board of Education worked diligently to not eliminate any programs in the Haywood County Schools such as the alternative school. Additionally, the Instructional Technology Department is located on the 2nd floor of the alternative school. Therefore, we would not have any facility savings if the alternative school closed on first floor.

- 9. The study states the need for new dining room furniture. The replacement of this furniture has been discussed by the PTA and is a project we hope to tackle in the coming year. It would have been something done sooner, however it was shot down by previous administration.**

Thank you PTA for your generous offer to purchase dining room furniture. The estimated cost is \$15,600.00

- 10. Apparently the decision has already been made to close the school as all but two of the board voted for its closing. So why put us through this? Why give us hope of saving the school if you've already made up your minds?**

The closing of CES has not been decided and will not be voted on until February 8 2016, G.S. 115C-72 (pg. 6-7 of the study) is being followed.

- 11. How is the capacity generated?**

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has a formula for calculating capacity as per the 2015-2016 North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Facilities Needs Survey.

12. What will happen to the building?

Because of declining enrollment in Haywood County Schools, the facility is not needed as a traditional school. The Board of Education has not made any decisions about the use of the facility. In the event CES is closed and the Board of Education determines there is no use for the property, it may be disposed as per General Statute 115C-518 and Board Policy 9400, Sale, Disposal and Lease of Board Owned Real Estate. The procedure is to first offer to county commissioners at a negotiated price and if no agreement is reached, it may be sold to the public.

13. Use money from the lottery?

The state cut all of our Average Daily Membership (ADM) Capital Funding in 2009-2010. That was an average annual budget cut of over \$350,000. ADM funding has not been reinstated. Also, our lottery allotment (used for capital expenditures) was just over \$1,000,000 in 2010-2011. The state cut that in half beginning in 2011-2012. That represents an additional state cut of approximately \$500,000 each year. We were told this would be used to pay teachers. We have not seen a \$500,000 increase in our teacher allotment to correspond with the cut. We are frequently asked, "Where does the Lottery money go?" That is a great question. Together these two state cuts represent over \$850,000 each year that we no longer receive.

14. Are we under/over allotments?

The student ratio to Central Office Administrators is 1:479. When the budget cuts began in January of 2009. The first cuts were administrative cuts. Administrative cuts have continued throughout the budget crisis. The following Central Office cuts have been made in an effort to support non-administrative operations.

2008-09 – Student Services Director

2008-09 – Offset Press Operator

2008-09 – Records Clerk/Testing Technical

2009-10 – Custodian

2010-11 – Payroll Supervisor

2010-11 – Administrative Assistant

2015-16 – Transportation Director

15. What would happen if CES closes?

A timeline would be developed to ensure a smooth transition for our students and staff. The timeline would include redistricting the school lines and making parents aware as quickly as possible.

16. Why not sell old Crabtree School and get the money for Central Elementary School?

The old Crabtree School is utilized as a School Food Service warehouse. Food and supplies for 16 schools are stored in the facility. If the property were sold, Haywood County Schools School Food Service would have to relocate and a new freezer would have to be purchased.

17. Why close an A+ School?

The decision to close CES was not made due to the school being an A+. The consideration to close the school is not based upon Central Elementary School's capacity. It is based upon the overall decrease in enrollment in the school district, the need to reduce the local budget by 2.4 million dollars, and the proximity of neighboring schools that could accommodate the students and staff.

18. Why don't you cut the State Representatives budget?

Haywood County Schools Board of Education has no control over wages paid to elected officials.

19. What school will my little brother go to?

If CES closes, students will attend Junaluska, Hazelwood, or an out of district assignment. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.