

Photos by Todd Luck

Alfred Harvey speaks.



Parent Leslie McLaurin makes a point.

WSPA
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school/college credit on their campus," she said. "But we're in the very beginning stages. We don't have details; we don't have agreements."

If the move happened, Hanes Middle School might move there and WSPA middle school students would merge with that student body. Emory emphasized that this was just one possibility if the move happened. Hanes was displaced after concerns over the toxicity on its campus last year and is currently housed in the old Hill Middle School, which is too small for the student body.

Emory said that if the move didn't happen, the school system would be looking at ways to better use the space, either by increasing WSPA enrollment or moving other programs into the unused space.

Parents voiced their disappointment that enrollment at WSPA wasn't higher and hadn't reached the 100 students per grade level Emory said the school needed to sustain itself. Many questioned if the school system had done enough to promote the school and attract students.

"The magnet has failed this school," said one parent.

Some felt Prep was being unfairly scrutinized when other schools have unused space, but Emory said that all schools with unused capacity are being looked at for better ways to use that space. Parents also said they thought there had been discussions about closing WSPA last year, but Emory said that those were only rumors, and that no one wanted to end the program. She said any change to WSPA would be to enhance it.

Parent Leslie McLaurin said she just wanted to see the program stay intact regardless of where it was at, though she also felt that if the school had more electives like band and home economics, that it would attract more students.

"I don't care where they go, as long as the program that you have set aside for them

doesn't change but is enhanced. It's going to be a good move," she said.

A front office employee at the school said she'd heard many concerns from middle school parents about merging with Hanes. Community member Alfred Harvey said it would be better to change the curriculum and attract more students instead of moving.

"The middle school students will be left here. What type of environment will the middle school stu-

dents be a part of if you bring another middle school here on top of these students?" he said.

School Board Member Victor Johnson questioned if the move was even possible. He

said he's talked with administrators at WSSU and they don't think there's room for a high school.

"I don't know what Dr. Robinson is talking about, but the people who run the show, they're saying they don't see that," he said.

WSPA Principal Richard Watts said that after he cleared up confusion among parents last year on if WSPA was closing, the ones he's heard from have been OK with the move. He said the students wanted to make sure the school remained intact wherever it went.

"They want a college prep program; they want to go to college," he said. "If it's here, it's here. If it's at Winston-Salem State, it's at Winston-Salem State. The key for them is to keep WSPA, to keep the Phoenix."

Watts also added that the school is growing, with 95 students in this year's freshman class.

Emory said they'll be more meetings and more chances to get feedback on the potential move, before April, which is when the bond proposal is supposed to be finalized.



WSPA Principal Richard Watts speaks to parents as Superintendent Beverly Emory looks on.

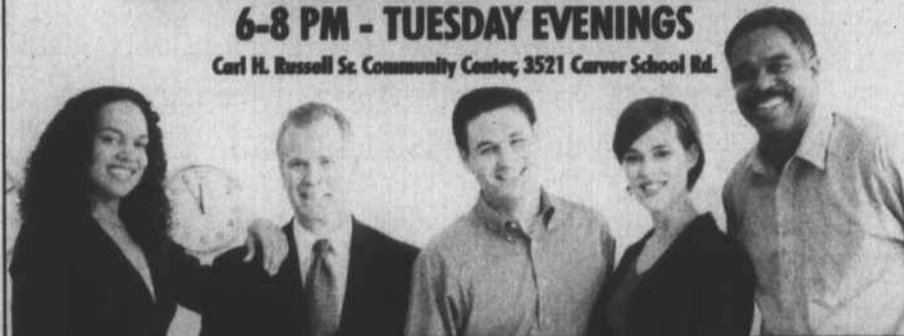
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