

**\$640,000 BUDGET SHORTFALL EXPECTED**

# Board Approves Union Elementary School Renovation

BY SUSAN USHER

By the time school begins in late August, contractors should almost be through renovating the oldest building on the Union Elementary School campus at Shallotte.

The 10-classroom building dates to 1951 and is heated by a boiler and cooled by window air conditioning units. Renovations would include a new heating and air conditioning system, new windows and dropped ceilings. Classrooms were recently recarpeted and the roof repaired so "this would take care of Union," said William Turner, assistant superintendent for auxiliary services.

The work, expected to cost about \$385,000, is among \$1.94 million in repairs, site improvements and construction approved by the Brunswick County Board of Education Monday night. The money is from state sources—half-cent sales tax revenues and an allocation based on school system enrollment.

It will probably be after July 1 before the rest of the current expense or capital outlay budget are adopted.

Before the start of the fiscal year on July 1, school board members expect to approve a continuation budget that allows the schools to operate at current levels until a 1993-94 budget is completed. That will probably happen after Brunswick County Commissioners and the N.C. General Assembly adopt their budgets and the school board has a better idea of how much money it will receive and what size salary increase teachers will receive.

Based on state- and locally-paid teachers receiving 2 percent increases, the school board still needs to cut \$602,000 from an operating budget Finance Officer Rudi Fallon and Staff Development Director Gloria Talley say is "fat-free" already. If the increase is 3 percent, another \$39,000 must be cut if other revenue sources aren't found.

The school board will meet again Monday, June 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the central office in Southport to continue

discussing the budget, particularly as it relates to Superintendent Ralph Johnston's proposed staff reorganization plan and the best approach to take in expanding West and North Brunswick high schools.

"If I seem a little frustrated, it is because I am," Johnston said after Monday's meeting. "I am very frustrated."

"Where are we going to find that kind of money? So much for restructuring. Of all the years not to get an increase in our current expense budget," he said, noting that Brunswick County is the only school system facing similar funding problems.

"The technology money helps, but technology alone won't do it," he said of efforts to improve county student performance.

Most of an increase in the county's allocation of \$8.7 million went to cover increased insurance, salary increases for clerical personnel and custodial and maintenance supplies.

One million dollars was designated for technology development. The money will be used to hire six computer lab specialists, to buy software, to design and install a computer network, to hook on to a fiber optic network being developed by UNC Wilmington and to train teachers and staff in use of the new equipment.

The school board had supported plans by Johnston to reorganize his administrative staff by putting more supervisory type staff in the field, a plan that must now be revisited.

Cut from the original budget were funds to hire nine or 10 lead teachers to coach their peers in the subject ar-

cas Brunswick County students are weakest in, a new salary schedule for other classified employees and higher supplements for bus drivers, and funds toward construction of a new elementary school in the Leland area and expansion and renovation of West Brunswick High School.

Monday night Assistant Superintendent Turner asked the board to consider going ahead with the first phase of renovating either West Brunswick or North Brunswick high school, since work could not begin on a new elementary school this year.

He proposed a 14,770-square-foot addition like the one at South Brunswick High—six classrooms and a new office suite, with renovation of the old office area into classrooms. "It would be a good start," he said.

Added board member Polly Russ, "We have totally run out of space at West. We have no place else to go."

Turner's to provide the board with enrollment figures and cost figures it needs to decide which high school has the greatest need, since both are badly overcrowded, and whether it would be more cost effective to do the work in phases or, as board member Bill Fairley queried,

*"We have totally run out of space at West. We have no place else to go."*

—Polly Russ, Board Member, Speaking on renovations needed at West Brunswick High School

"squirrel away" money and contract the entire job at once.

Board member Yvonne Bright also asked about the possibility of a different type of renovation.

"Certainly the offices at North Brunswick need to be moved to the front, but it seems like what we need most is just classrooms."

Given the lack of money to meet all needs, board members still want to settle on school priorities in several areas before adopting a final budget, such as whether to replace a maintenance vehicle with between 150,000 and 200,000 miles on it or buy more instructional supplies for classrooms.

"The way I see it," said Turner in defense of the line item, "If the maintenance people can't get to the buildings to take care of them, we won't have schools."

## Correction

The source of six scholarships with a combined value of \$4,000 presented to West Brunswick High School seniors last week was incorrectly identified in a June 10 Beacon article on the school senior awards program.

The Dr. Kendall H. Suh Civitan Scholarships are given annually by the South Brunswick Isles Civitan Club.

Also, the amount of the scholarship awarded by Long Bay Garden Club was given incorrectly. The scholarship was for \$300.

The Beacon apologizes for the error.

# Southport Elementary School Will Blend Arts Into Classrooms

Southport Elementary School is one of three southeastern North Carolina elementary schools chosen to become pilot schools as part of the A+ Schools Program.

Southport, Chadbourn Elementary in Columbus County and Sunset Park Elementary in New Hanover County have agreed to work to integrate academic disciplines and the arts in an effort to improve the classroom learning environment and academic performance.

The project is based on studies that show academic performance improves in school programs that blend music, art and dance into the curriculum on a daily basis.

The program will cost approximately \$77,500 per school per year, and the pilot program will last four years. Local boards of education have committed to pay \$25,800 for each site this coming year. The Arts Council of the Lower Cape Fear is raising \$194,000 in matching funds

for the pilot program plus a resource program that is to make community cultural resources more accessible to all schools, K-12.

The school district allocation is to increase annually until local school boards assume the entire program cost by the fifth year, the end of the pilot project.

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction will provide evaluation and assessment services during the pilot project, publishing the results.

Sen. R.C. Soles Jr., D-Columbus, filed a bill Monday that would allocate \$40,000 to the program.

Sponsors are seeking funds to pay for a four-day teacher training seminar at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington for approximately 150 teachers from the participating schools. The A+ program requires educators to make significant changes in the ways they both teach and learn.

The three schools were chosen

from among six applicants from the seven counties involved in planning for the project. The counties include Robeson, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Pender, Sampson and New Hanover.

## SignLanguage Course Planned During Summer

Brunswick Community College will offer a class in American Sign Language during the summer.

Class objective will be to enable students to communicate with the hearing-impaired through the use of American Sign Language hand symbols. The eight-week course will be taught by board-certified, master-level teacher Jean Kalzynski.

For registration or information, call Brunswick Community College at 754-6922.

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