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KM School Board Opposed To Merger

By TOM McINTYRE
Editor, Mirror-Herald

One of the projects the Greater Shelby Chamber of Commerce will push this year is merger of the Shelby City, Cleveland County and Kings Mountain District Schools.

Last week Dr. Vincent Columbo, head of the chamber education committee, presented a proposal that the board explore the feasibility of the merger. He told the chamber directors "It may be controversial - or it may not be."

Of the three systems, Kings Mountain District Schools is the largest area and student population-wise. This was not true five years ago when the merits and demerits of a merger of the three school systems was first discussed. At that time educators and administrators and private citizens were very much opposed to the idea.

At the time Donald Jones was superintendent of the local system and different persons were on the board of education. However, it was their opinions such a merger would do nothing for either Kings Mountain or Shelby, that only the Cleveland County system would benefit.

Some of the present board of education members still feel the same way.

Mrs. June Lee said, "I am not in favor of it. I think Cleveland County's system feels both Kings Mountain and Shelby have much more than it does, but I think it be better for Kings Mountain to remain separate. I think we are progressing nicely on our own and see no reason to change that."

Mrs. Lee said she has been told by people in areas that have consolidated school systems that the story it is cheaper and more equal opportunity-wise for the students is "not true."

Kyle Smith said he doesn't feel "Kings Mountain would get a fair shake in such a merger. I haven't

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Supt. Davis Recommends Extension

Snow storms have cost students five days of classes this school year, according to Kings Mountain District Schools Supt. William Davis.

Three of those days have been written off because students were required to attend classes Jan. 12 and Feb. 7 and 8 - all three originally designated as spring holidays.

The other two days could be added to the end of the school term.

Davis said, "I will recommend to the school board at the March meeting that the two days be added on, extending the last day of school for students on June 8 instead of June 6. The last days for teachers would be June 12 instead of June 8."

Davis said he has talked about the makeup days with principals in the district schools and a suggestion the days lost due to weather be made up on Saturdays was abandoned. "There are too many absences on Saturday makeup days to make it worthwhile," he said.

The superintendent also said there were a "minimum of problems" following reopening of school after snow holidays. He said there were incidents of buses being stuck in the mud, but no more so than on rainy school days.

"Schools reopened smoothly," Davis said, "and the absences due to illness have subsided considerably according to the school nurse, Mrs. Bennett Masters. Attendance is getting back to normal."



HOW HIGH'S THE WATER? - Pretty deep. The weekend rains raised creeks to the overflowing point

and flooded many low-lying areas. But the weatherman says clear skies are on the way...

Photos By Gary Stewart