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KINGS MOUNTAIN, NC

## Board Continues Facilities Study

Replacing old buildings at Bethware and Grover elementary schools would cost about \$2 million, Superintendent Bob McRae told members of the board of education at their regular monthly meeting Monday night at the administration office.

The board completed its discussion of elementary facility needs and next month will discuss Central Middle School. In upcoming meetings, the board will wind up its facility discussions with the junior and senior high schools.

Total facility needs for the system's five elementary schools are about \$4.5 million, McRae reminded the board. The board discussed the needs of North, East and West schools at last month's meetings.

Bethware and Grover, both located out of the city limits and acquired through consolidation in 1961, have some of the older school buildings in Cleveland County. In fact, McRae said, the old building at Grover which houses the auditorium and four music and academically talented classrooms, is the oldest school building in the county that is still being used. It was built in 1915 and the top story of it burned in 1951.

McRae said the old building at Bethware which houses the gymnasium, auditorium and six classrooms needs to be replaced. The building was constructed in 1925 and renovated in 1936 and 1950. He estimated that replacing the building with a multi-purpose building which would include a gymnasium would cost \$1,146,600.

Bethware, he pointed out, is the system's largest elementary school. The enrollment is down this year to 435 students.

Bethware has no space problems now, McRae noted, but if the sixth grades were moved back to elementary schools in the near future, there would be a need for five additional classrooms, adding about \$300,000 to the building costs. McRae said Bethware would have 521 students if the sixth grade was there this year.

"The site is good size," McRae said, pointing out that the campus contains 14.7 acres. "Bethware has good buildings except for the age of the older building. I feel like that's the age building we need to get out of."

Grover, he said, has the largest campus of any elementary school in the system. Its 20 acres is seven more than the state recommends. Its enrollment is also down this year.

McRae proposes replacing the old 1915 building mentioned above, and also the building which houses the principal's office, library and storage areas.

"These buildings have needed replacing for a long time," he said. "The people of

Grover have done a good job to be in them this long."

"The space is inadequate," he said. "I would suggest replacing the two buildings with one and construct a multi-purpose type building with some physical education space in it, rather than just an auditorium."

McRae said Grover's 351 students don't have any space problems in the 14 classrooms, but if the sixth grade was moved back to Grover, it would need an additional classroom.

McRae estimated the cost of replacing the two Grover buildings at \$729,300.

"So far, we've just dealt with replacing obsolete buildings" at the five elementary schools, McRae told the board. "There are many other buildings that need renovating."

"It would take \$4.5 to \$5 million just to replace the obsolete buildings on the five elementary campuses," he said. "That's a lot of money, but the longer we wait, the more money it will take."

Next month's facility discussion, about Central, will take a different format, McRae said, because there will be several options to look at.

"There will be additional options rather than building on that campus," he said. "Personally, I feel Central needs to be discontinued as far as use by students."

In a matter which relates to building, McRae told the board that after this school year the system will not receive its share of the two one-half cents sales taxes on a per pupil basis as has been the case in the past. The county commissioners, he said, have the option of appropriating those funds on a per pupil basis, or on what they see as the county's biggest school facility need.

"In November, the county commissioners agreed that the Boiling Springs Elementary School is the number one facility need in the county and made a moral commitment to replace that facility," McRae told the board. "We don't argue with their right to make that decision, but we do urge them not to limit their focus on doing their most urgent need...but to consider the needs of all the systems."

McRae said he feels that the need of replacing Central is as great as any need in the county. Central, built in the 1920's, is a three-story facility which does not meet the government regulations of serving the physically handicapped students.

McRae predicted that Kings Mountain would lose \$160,000 to \$170,000 if the sales tax monies are not distributed on a per pupil basis.



TOYS FOR TOTS MAKE CHRISTMAS BRIGHTER—Fireman Bud Ware stands in the midst of a Christmas Toy House built by local firemen to house Toys for Tots which benefit the area needy this Christmas. The toy collection is continuing by firemen who are repairing bicycles to be presented on Christmas Eve by Santa Claus.

## 'Tis The Season To Help Your Neighbor In Need

The Christmas season of giving is here and local citizens can help others through various projects underway by churches, civic groups and schools.

People That Love Center on North Piedmont Avenue has the names of 40 children whose Christmas will not be merry without the donations of caring people, says Wanda Kyle, Director. Mrs. Kyle said that the Center badly needs staple food items, warm winter clothes, blankets, and good toys, in addition to fruits, nuts, and candy for Christmas sharing with the less fortunate. Mrs. Kyle is also accepting gifts of money which will be used to purchase new toys and fuel and food for the area needy. Mrs. Kyle said that all donations are tax-deductible and that all gifts, large or small, will be appreciated. Mrs. Kyle said that the Center has helped many families during the Thanksgiving season and "someone is always at our door who needs help during this busy holiday season" she added.

Ministers in the Greater Kings Mountain Ministerial Association are ringing bells in the shopping district for benefits of the Helping Hand project which provides year-round Christmas cheer in the form of fuel and staple foods for the needy. Rev. Graham Wood, chairman of the project, said ministers will be in front of Harris Teeter, TG&Y and Winn Dixie from 1-7 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and Dec. 18, 19 and 20 to accept donations from the public. Citizens will recognize those persons as Helping Hand fund-raisers by a bell, which they will be ringing, and a bucket in which citizens may place their donations.

Operation Toys for Tots by the Kings Mountain Fire Department is off to a good start and the Toy House in the Fire Department is bulging with toys donated by local citizens. Firemen are requesting new or good, used, repairable toys which they will distribute prior to Christmas Eve to area needy children.

Operation Santa Claus, sponsored by the Cleveland County Mental Health Association, has received good response from shoppers who choose an ornament representing a mentally handicapped person and buy gifts for that person by using the list on the back of the ornament. The unwrapped gifts are then returned to the tree

with the ornament. The unwrapped gifts are then returned to the tree with the ornament. As an added incentive, Roses, J.C. Penney, Belk and Hudson's, give 10 percent discount to "Love Tree" shoppers.

Collection boxes have also been placed in businesses throughout the county for gifts for patients at Broughton Hospital or Western Carolina Center.

The Cleveland County Red Cross Chapter and local fire departments are participating in WSOC-TV Channel 9's "Cover With Love" project which seeks donations of new or clean blankets to help the needy and homeless keep warm this winter. In this area there are collection boxes at Grover

Fire Department and Kings Mountain Fire Department.

At Kings Mountain Senior High School, the Student Council is gearing up for its biggest collection of canned goods ever, according to Danny Hamrick, president. Students are encouraged to ask their parents to do some extra shopping and canned foods are to be collected by December 19th, the last day of school before the holidays. Dean Westmoreland is sponsor.

The KMSHS Beta Club, of which Kammie Wiggins is president, is sponsoring an Operation Santa Claus project for the needy. Toys are to be collected and brought to school by Dec. 19th. Club

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## Auditors Say KM School Fund Balance Is Dropping

Auditors Steve Wade and Mike Gray told the Kings Mountain Board of Education Monday night that the system's fund balance could become a problem in the near future.

Gray pointed out that the fund balance at the end of the 1985 school year was \$900,000, but at the end of the 1986 school year had dropped to just over \$600,000.

"It's not a problem now, but the fund balance is a cushion for future additions or unexpected expenditures," he told the board. "It needs to stabilize or increase over the next few years so you can have a comfort level."

In discussing the recently-completed audit of funds, Gray told the board that he had issued a "qualified" opinion of the school system's financial record-keeping, rather than an "unqualified" opinion which indicates a profit for the year. McRae clean opinion. He said there were some problems that report was given this month new superintendent Bob McRae and new financial officer Tim Echols are now

aware of and that they are working toward correcting.

"Tim has moved into a tough position," Gray said. "Next year, things are going to be better. Mr. McRae's come in and has a good staff. I'm impressed."

Gray said the school system has taken a giant step toward correcting financial losses in the school food services department. He said the net loss for 1985 was \$108,000, but the system had cut the net loss at the end of the 1986 school year to \$5,800. "The situation is improving," he said. "I understand that so far this year that school food services is operating in the black."

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Later in the meeting, new School Food Services Director Stella Ware presented the board with a three-months financial statement which showed her department with a profit for the year. McRae said a three-month financial report was given this month because schools operated on

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## Herald Subscription Rates To Go Up On January 1

Due to the increase in second class postage rates the yearly subscription rate of the Kings Mountain Herald will be \$12.00 a year beginning Jan. 1. Out of state rates will be \$13.00 per year. Anyone wishing to renew their subscription at the present rate may do so until January 1.

**Ministers  
To Ring Bell  
For Needy**

Members of the Kings Mountain Ministerial Association are preparing for their annual bell-ringing project which will benefit area needy families through the association's Helping Hand Fund.

Rev. Graham Wood, chairman of the project, said ministers will be in front of Harris Teeter, TG&Y and Winn Dixie from 1-7 p.m. on December 11, 12 and 13, and December 18, 19 and 20 to accept donations from the public.

Citizens will recognize those persons as Helping Hand fund-raisers by a bell, which they will be ringing, and a bucket in which citizens may place their donations.

The Helping Hand Fund provides groceries and other necessities to needy families in the Greater Kings Mountain area throughout the year.