

BUSY TIME OF THE YEAR

There are but a handful of days left until Christmas 2006. What a busy time of the year it is for most of us! There are school activities, community events, and church programs to the degree that we all have ample opportunities to be about as active as we want to be. Mingled within all of these other activities have been opportunities for folks to attend the first schematic design meetings for the new elementary schools in each of our attendance areas. These occurred on December 4th (Peebles), December 7th (North Adams), and December 11th (West Union). Meetings with building staffs also occurred on these three dates. This marked a milestone in our building project, as it signaled the start of a very important and fun stage of our project.

For the past 15-18 months, we have toured various new school buildings across southern Ohio. Those who have participated in these visits have included elementary administrators, teachers, district level administrators, board members, and PASS members. All of these individuals and more were welcomed to participate in the building tours. In addition, a team has met since June to complete the Program of Requirements (POR) portion of the project for the Ohio School Facilities Commission. That team, as noted in an earlier article, consisted of elementary principals, central office administrators, and two board members. Our architectural firm, Steed Hammond Paul, Inc., used the comments from the school visits, along with the comments from the POR team meetings to construct three possible lay-outs for each of our three attendance areas. This included one two-story drawing at each site.

It has become obvious from all of the feedback that we have received that a two-story building is not perceived as the most attractive option by anyone. Therefore, both options being considered at each of our three sites were one-story options. Given the fact that one-story buildings of this size could be constructed at approximately the same cost as two-story buildings, there was really no reason to go with a two-story option. At these first round schematic design meetings, the architects took notes on the suggestions offered by staff and community members. These suggestions will be used to revise the drawings presented in December. Staff and community members also offered their choice as to which option was the most widely preferred. The architects will bring back revised drawings for the second round of schematic design meetings in January.

To be sure, the board will work with the architects to incorporate as many suggestions into the project as educationally or financially feasible. However, in the end, I can almost guarantee that we will run out of money before we run out of ideas. We are committed to the aspect of due diligence in seeing to it that when this project is completed, our students, staffs, and taxpayers will be pleased with the results. We know that our new facilities will be far superior to our present elementaries, as they should be.

If you missed out on the first round of schematic design meetings, but are interested in attending the next round, please make note of the following dates and times:

- **NORTH ADAMS** – TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007 – IN HIGH SCHOOL ROUND ROOM – Staff Meeting at 3:20 p.m. – Community Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

- **PEEBLES** – THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2007 – AT PEEBLES ELEMENTARY – Staff Meeting at 3:20 p.m. – Community Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- **WEST UNION** – TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2007 – AT WEST UNION ELEMENTARY – Staff Meeting at 3:20 p.m. – Community Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

As always, should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 544-5586. Again, I encourage you to stay on top of the latest developments in our building program by visiting either of these websites: www.ovsd.us or www.superschools.org. My next article will deal with Ohio's proposed CORE Curriculum Bill. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent