

BROWNSBURG

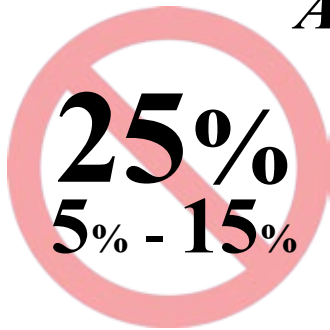


SENTINEL

May 1st, 2015

\$96,000,000 Referendum

A Community Decision Part II



Tax Increase Analysis

Dr. Snapp In His Own Words

Will there be a tax increase if the referendum passes? -- YES! By the amounts claimed by supporters or detractors? ?? ???

Various Claims To Date:

- #1) **Source:** Brownsburg Community School Corporation (BCSC) *per FaceBook posting by Cindy Tucker Mcloed of "Friends-of-Brownsburg-Community-School" page*
Tax rates will increase between 5.1% to 14.8%.
- #2) **Source:** BCSC per its Political Action Committee (PAC) web site www.supportbrownsburg.com, under their Tax Impact Calculator link titled "To Learn the truth about how the referendum tax impact is calculated click here". Read this and you will find the following statement, "Debt is falling off this year that will lower the Tax Rate"
- #3) **Source:** Terry Laas & Jennifer Cox with Brownsburg Residents for Fiscal Responsibility ("VOTE NO" Yard Signs)
"25% Property Tax Increase"
- #4) **Source:** Contributing Columnist Jim Murphy -Former BCSC School Board Member
11.78% to 19.72% Property Tax Increase For Homes Assessed Value (AV) 100K to 500K
Additional detail found on page 05.

Item #1 Cindy Tucker McLoed refused to give details to this publication that supported her conclusions.

Item #2 Note as found in the above link, the page titled "To Learn the Truth..... Click here", it is not a simple calculation to determine your tax impact. However, you can get a rough idea by finding your current tax bill on the same link you use to calculate the tax impact at the www.supportbrownsburg.com, web site. Add both of the amounts given, based on your current AV, to your present tax bill and divide the total by your present tax bill.

Example run a TEST by using a home with assessed value of \$148,600 the tax calculator will show \$95.22 in BIG bold numbers and \$121.67 in a smaller bold number. The total of both, in this case is \$216.89 add this to the current tax bill, lets say \$1486, + 216.89 = \$1702.89 / \$1486 = 1.1459 or a 14.59% increase. Note this is only a very rough estimate. Jim Murphy has refined this process a bit more and has run it on homes with assessed values of \$100,000 through \$500,000. Note the results show that as the AV of a home increases the % of tax increase goes up.

Item #3, "25% Property Tax Increase". Both Terry Laas & Jennifer Cox with Brownsburg Residents for Fiscal Responsibility refused to provide *any* information to this publication which supported their organizations conclusions.

Item #4 Contributing Columnist Jim Murphy - Additional detail found on page 05.

... continued on page 05

The February 6th, 2015 edition laid the foundation to inform the reader on various aspects relating to the upcoming BCSC Tax Referendum. Providing background into history, the current problems facing the BCSC, an overview of their submissions to the public, and the estimated costs of their purposed solutions.

This edition goes the next step, this publication submitted nearly 5 pages of questions to Dr. Snapp. Questions ranging from the wording of the referendum, the design process, management of the construction projects, the level of transparency BSCS intends to provide into the reporting of project status and expenses, how the new facility will be used to uplift the educational experience of *all* students, near-term forecasts for growth, BCSC tentative plans to accommodate such growth, the current dollar projected costs for doing so, among many other topics.

The questions originated from this publication's conversations with a wide variety of people who stood either for or against the referendum, as well as a few submitted by the Brownsburg Sentinel. The question to Dr. Snapp is in italics, his answer follows in normal type face.

In the end, this publication's goal is to obtain as much information from those charged with not only delivering award winning educational experiences now but are laying the framework for the many generations which follow.

... continued on page 03



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

They who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety - Benjamin Franklin

Letter from the Editor

Hearts sank lower than the Titanic April 9th 2015, when Town Council president Mr. Spencer said these chilling words "It's time to keep subjective commentary out of comments"... They are becoming quite aggravating to say the least". Many in the audience did a double take. Two residents suggested to me later the rhetoric parroted lines from the prior town council president his majesty Gary Hood when he decreed—"I was not elected to vote the will of the people" had Gary somehow returned to his throne?

The thin veil of "reform" now cast aside (a position once advocated by the all of the "new" majority), reveals this administration's true objectives....stay the course, silence members of the public who offer updates on own going litigation (they are offered in Town Council because they are not available from any town sources), and dissenting opinions of the actions taken by the town's, elected hired, and appointed public servants.

In step with the previous administration Mr. Spencer does not feel bound to abide by the rules of decorum he just subjected upon citizens moments earlier. Less than two minutes later Mr. Spencer says "I want everyone in the town to realize the dockets are reviewed at least by this councilman and I am sure by others" this certainly qualifies as a subjective comment by any definition.

This publication's assertion is further strengthened by Mr. Spencer's own actions. This publication made two attempts to contact public servant Mr. Spencer to clarify his statements. Mr. Spencer after learning of the meeting agenda, subsequent requests to set up a meeting went unanswered. A phrase recently heard in council chambers fittingly describes Mr. Spencer's actions "...your silence speaks volumes sir".

Since Mr Spencer said "So there is a cost to governance and we're not ashamed of it." This publication suggests creating a prominent menu selection on the start bar from the Town's website main home page labeled "North Annexation Updates". There provide timely updates, ongoing high-level summaries on and status of the litigation, dates and times of hearings, including a cumulative total of dollars spent from suit inception to the present day on attorneys fees and expenses. Provide the public visibility into the true costs to the town, this will help determine if residents share the councils enthusiasm for continuing the litigation effort.

Furthermore, during the council meeting held June 26, 2014 Mr. Dawes said on "I encourage the council to vote "YES" for 07.02 and 07.03 which are the ordinances designed to repeal the two annexations you voted on in 2013." Mr. Nulty said "These people believe we are taking those very hard fought freedoms away....., I am going to ask you to favorably vote on agenda items 07.02 and 07.03, give these people the freedom they deserve". Now after being elected as public servants Mr. Spencer and the new majority decrees

on April 9th 2015, "The council was divided on annexation, this council is together and resolute in its defense in what the councils decision was regarding annexation". While this stance plays well to the casual observer; when taken to the next logical step, such a posture makes it rather difficult to remedy past miscues made by this or any prior administration. An air of arrogance and infallibility, yet another specter from the prior administration, this group must wrestle itself free from, if their original agenda of "reform" is to be believed. Furthermore, this runs counter to his current reelection campaign slogan "I Value Public Opinion". --The Editor

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At Noon Fellowship Dinner Will Be Served. Feel Free to Participate
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At 1:00PM. More Music by The Patriot Quartet

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Your VOTE COUNTS !!

On May 5, 2015, Brownsburg, Brown Township and Lincoln township residents will be asked to vote. On this date, there are 5 open positions and two very important school referendum questions on the ballot.

Positions before the voters are:

Clerk Treasurer: Jeanette Brickler, Ann Hathaway
Town Council Ward 2: Chris Worley
Town Council Ward 3: Brian Jessen, Emory Lencke
Town Council Ward 4: Ashley Hobbs, Don Spencer
B'Burg Town Court Judge: Neil Davis,
Charles (Gene) Hostetter



Voters will be asked to weigh in on two school referendum questions:

Public Question #1:

“SHALL BROWNSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION ISSUE BONDS OR ENTER INTO A LEASE TO FINANCE THE RENOVATION OF AND IMPROVEMENTS TO BROWNSBURG HIGH SCHOOL AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO COST NOT MORE THAN \$95,000,000 AND IS ESTIMATED TO INCREASE THE PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR DEBT SERVICE BY A MAXIMUM OF \$0.4117 PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUATION?”

Public Question #2:

“FOR THE 7 CALENDAR YEARS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE HOLDING OF THE REFERENDUM, SHALL BROWNSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION IMPOSE A PROPERTY TAX RATE THAT DOES NOT EXCEED FOUR AND 78/100 CENTS (\$0.0478) ON EACH ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100) OF ASSESSED VALUATION AND THAT IS IN ADDITION TO ALL OTHER PROPERTY TAX LEVIES IMPOSED BY THE SCHOOL CORPORATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF FUNDING COSTS RELATED TO PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, INCLUDING STAFFING AND OPERATIONAL EXPENSES OF A NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?”



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In His Own Words, *continued from pg. 1*

Referendum Questions & Timing

Q. 01- Many citizens do not understand why the high school renovation and the new elementary school construction projects are combined into one question on the referendum. Why was this done?

A. 01- The two projects were combined because they are both critical to the future success of our students. Without the construction of the seventh elementary school, there will be overcrowded classrooms and additional trailers at each school. The high school is beyond capacity and has overcrowded hallways and classrooms. There is not the instructional space to deliver the curriculum our students need to be successful now and beyond graduation. The core of the high school is nearly 50 years old and the infrastructure is in need of work. It is essential to the success of our students that both of these projects are supported by the community on May 5th.

Q. 02- Why were these two referendums placed on the ballot in an off year election? Using this approach requires opening polling places outside the town of Brownsburg (which would otherwise remain closed), to allow those citizens to vote on the referendum. In addition, off year elections are proven to have low voter turnout.

A. 02- BCSC has done many things to put off building a new elementary school including adding classrooms at three schools in the last two years, adding 10 trailers for additional classroom space and redistricting students for the 2014-2015 school year. Even with those steps, 220 new students to Brownsburg in the fall of 2014 accelerated capacity issues. Many of those new students were in grades 5-8 which will increase the enrollment of BHS from 2,292 this year to well over 2,600 in the next few years as those students matriculate to the high school. This growth accelerated the time-line for these projects.

Community Outreach

Q. 03- Citizen questions were collected on Jan 6th and Jan 8th. Adam Brower said towards the end of the presentation, the school board had not yet reached a decision. The questions and comments collected from the public would be considered before the school board voted to proceed with the referendum. Were the questions and their answers made available to the school board prior to the board's vote to proceed with the referendum?

A. 03- Following the community forum on Thursday, January 8, the questions and answers were provided to the School Board to review prior to their vote on Monday, January 12, 2015. It should also be noted that a majority of the School Board members attended the community forum on either/both January 6 or January 8 and heard the questions in person. The School Board was also involved in the community planning process that started in September 2013 and consisted of seven well-publicized public meetings that concluded in April 2014.

Q. 04- Each homeowners situation is unique as a variety of factors come into play to determine an individual homeowners tax increase. Why was the “best case scenario” (lowest cost to the tax payer) used in all presentation materials and other communications to the public with little mention that the tax resulting from the referendum is not a one size fits all rate? Why was this done?

A. 04- The “best case scenario” or lowest cost to the tax payer was not presented. The cost that was presented to the tax payer is based on a bond rate of 3.5% interest rate. The current rate is closer to 2.85% interest rate which lowers that tax impact. Secondly, the estimates consider a fixed assessed value in our community over the term of the loan, which does not lower the tax rate to homeowners and businesses. Last year in Brownsburg the assessed value rose 5.1% which lowered the school tax rate, along with all other rates.

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... continued on page 04

In His Own Words, *continued from pg. 3*

A. 04- cont.- And lastly, the estimates shared take into account the full impact of the General Fund referendum, which is a tax rate that could generate more than \$1,000,000 that is necessary to fund staffing for the new elementary school. The School Board has committed to not use full rate as the assessed value increases. We fully expect the impact to the tax payer will be less than has been presented.

Q. 05- *Presentations to the public on January 6th, January 8th and later at the Chamber of Commerce provide information on the referendums impact to the individual home owner. Little information was provided regarding the impact on business owners. Why was this information excluded from the presentations?*

A. 05- The community meetings on January 6 and 8 were focused on homeowners and residents, most of whom specifically care about how they are impacted with regard to the referendum. Many, if not most, of the business owners at the Chamber of Commerce meeting live in Brownsburg as well. It was clearly stated to the business owners that this would have a greater tax impact on them when compared to homeowners. In spite of the impact to businesses, many Brownsburg business owners have been vocal in their support of the referendum. Successful schools bring more patrons which positively impacts business. In every presentation, regardless of the audience, the tax impact has always been discussed.

Q. 06- *Do you plan to hold any additional public meetings to communicate answers to questions received over this time, to dispel rumors and misinformation on the topic, and to collect the final questions so the answers can be communicated prior to the election?*

A. 06- Since the School Board approved the questions to be placed on the ballot, I've meet with nearly a dozen community groups and held countless meetings with small groups and individuals. My personal cell phone number (317-509-5753) has been and continues to be available to the public to call me and ask questions at any time. In addition, the Friends of Brownsburg Schools, the community led group supporting this referendum, has an excellent web page, supportbrownsburg.com and through the hard work of hundreds of volunteers met thousands of patrons as they go door-to-door. In addition to my unlimited personal accessibility, the web site and meeting people face-to-face, there have been and continue to be numerous ways for people to get accurate and truthful information from the Friends of Brownsburg Schools.

Project Design - Goal - Facilitate Academic Excellence

A significant portion of the remodel seems to be geared towards the S.T.E.M. curriculum.

Q. 07a- *What portion of the remodel is directed towards students which have educational objectives outside the usual collegiate path i.e. a high school diploma, G.E.D., vocational, technical and other skilled trades?*

A. 07a- This important project focuses on the needs of all our students. While some students know their career path as freshmen, or even earlier, most students begin to focus on the next phase in their education in high school, therefore all spaces are designed to help students make the best appropriate decisions for them. Additionally, these spaces are flexible and may accommodate a future Purdue engineering student in one class period and a student pursuing a work certification at the vocational school the next period.

Q. 07b- *In the redesign, describe what is being provided to uplift the educational experiences for special needs, I.E.P., hardships, and others facing academic opportunities?*

A. 07b- BCSC has and will continue to have outstanding programming for all students including those with special education needs. The renovation enhances instructional space and curricular offerings for all

our students, including those with special needs.

Q. 07c- *Is there a curriculum development team tasked with taking advantage of the new facilities? If so, please provide the team's charter; and objectives.*

A. 07c- The entire BHS staff had input on this proposal, and should the community support this referendum, the staff will continue to drive this project based on their specific and highly relevant input.

Q. 07d- *Again, is the full spectrum of entire student body's educational experiences and desired outcomes contain within this team's mission?*

A. 07d- Yes, see above.

Q. 07e- *When do they start?*

A. 07e- They already have by providing significant direction on this proposal and, should the community support the referendum, they will continue to do so in the future.

Q. 07f- *Who are the members?*

A. 07f- The Brownsburg High School Staff.

Q. 07g- *Have any staffing gaps been identified?*

A. 07g- Only those created by growing enrollment.

Q. 08- *The school's design should be based on achieving certain educational programs and goals. Please provide any and all studies used to validate the current design.*

A. 08- Each BCSC educator brings extensive experience and background to the discussion that resulted in the plan, in addition to the seven community forums that were held for input into the project. Each of the specific studies used by numerous individuals are nearly impossible to compile and list, particularly in such a short time frame allowed for these answers; however, in addition to that information, the following schools were visited to gather information:

- Columbus North, East, and Signature High School (curricular)
- Southport High School (curricular)
- Avon, Ben Davis, Warren Central, (food services)
- Decatur Central, Carmel, (food services)

Project Design - Construction, Project Management

Many people question why a significant portion of the high school remodel involves the demolition of part of the building to the ground, and in other areas demolition leaving only structural load bearing members.

Q. 09- *At first glance the total portion of demolition within the overall renovation project seems extraordinarily high. Please provide detailed justification for this approach.*

A. 09- The high school project includes 273,236 square feet of renovation to the existing structure and additional space. In addition,

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... continued to page 5

Mr. Kendall - Investigations Continue

Mr Kendall still refuses to provide the data to back up the "FACTS" he quoted in his speech during Town Council meetings in 2014.

Dual Office Holding - The public awaits Final Ruling from the State Attorney General The matter is in the hands of the Indiana State Attorney General for a final ruling. *This matter is not closed.*



Tax Increase Analysis, *continued from page 01*

All examples above and below are based only on the following: Lot size of one acre or less, up to a two car garage, a mortgage exemption, and are for tax year 2016 pay 2017.

Home AV	Est. % of Increase	Home AV	Est. % of Increase
\$100,000	11.78% to 15.1%	\$300,000	18.28%
\$146,000	14.46 % to 15.1 %	\$350,000	18,80%
\$225,000	17.07%	\$400,000	19.18%
\$250,000	17.55%	\$500,000	19.72%
<i>AV = Assessed Value</i>		<i>Calculations provided by Jim Murphy</i>	

Summary:

#1) Posting by Mrs. LcLoed of "Friends-of-Brownsburg-Community-Schools" Facebook page. Refused to give details to this publication that supported her conclusions.

#2) If you use the Support Brownsburg web site calculator: You need to work the details for your own lot or at least take the general buckets listed above. Their calculator uses the following parameters: Lot size of one acre or less, up to a two car garage, with or without a mortgage exemption.

#3) The 25% claim from Brownsburg Residents for Fiscal Responsibility, refused to provide any information which supported their organizations conclusions.

If you require assistance in calculating your estimated tax impact contact this publication at referendum@brownsburgsentinel.com, we will direct you to the resources used to construct this article.

VOTE YES ___ VOTE NO ___ JUST VOTE X !!!!

*-- Jim Murphy, Brownsburg
Contributing Columnist
and the Editor*

Note - Legal Disclaimer:

This information is deemed accurate but is not guaranteed. This information is provided as a public service for informational purposes only, every homeowner, renter, or business owner circumstances are unique. The Brownsburg Sentinel advises the reader to contact the Hendricks County Assessor's office, State of Indiana Department of Local Government Finance, The Brownsburg Community School Corporation and their financial advisor, to obtain the correct percentage increase specific to their circumstances.

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In His Own Words, *continued from pg. 4*

A. 09- cont. approximately 154,854 square feet of the existing facility will be rebuilt as a result of expanding classrooms on the second floor, - hallways, and linking the 13 renovations to BHS since 1976 into a coherent structure to support 3,000 students and future growth.

Q. 10- *Why is the seating area of the auditorium being demolished as a part of this project; when a few years ago a referendum targeted to upgrade this area failed in its formative stages?*

A. 10- The performing arts expansion project was remonstrated in 2005. Following the 2005 remonstrance the stage and associated support spaces serving the current auditorium were renovated in 2007. The current house of 700 seats has only had cosmetic improvements since the original building opened (the seats were reupholstered in 2006 but are otherwise the same seats installed in 1971). The proposed project includes an expanded house and technical support areas to serve the needs of a high school of over 3,000 students.

Q. 11a- *Once completed what percent of the interior appointments to the facilities would be classified as "state of the art" or "best of class" vs. "Above average" or "standard practice". Please provide detailed examples of furnishing and fittings and rationale by room and by construction project.*

A. 11a- In the last five years there have been some minor and more significant construction projects in BCSC. It is best to look at those projects to get a better understanding of the finishes and approach to projects.

- Six kindergarten classrooms, two each, have been added Cardinal Elementary School, Delaware Trail Elementary School and White Lick Elementary School match existing construction.

- Eight preschool classrooms were added to the old Brownsburg High School (located on 310 Stadium Drive) addition, providing an excellent indication of what is expected in renovated construction now in BCSC.

- Central Office relocation: To allow more room for Brown Elementary School, the Central Office moved to the 310 Stadium Drive, which was built in 1956 and served the community as a high school, intermediate school, elementary school and was finally leased to the Brownsburg Parks Department. Modestly renovating a nearly 60 year old facility for use for another 50 years, was an excellent use of tax payer funds and optimized space. The high school and elementary projects will be aligned with the type of work that has been completed in past five years. Patrons can contact me directly at 317-509-5753 if they would like to see/tour the renovated Central Office or any other facility.

... continued to page 6

In His Own Words, *continued from pg. 5*

Q. 11b- *Are any private or public sponsorships being pursued to offset finishing costs?*

A. 11b- We always seek sponsorships and if there are interested community members or business, I encourage them to contact me.

Q. 12- *How will the student experience be impacted during the remodeling process? What transitional education methods will be put in place to address the disruptions? I saw preliminary plans of this nature in your presentation to me in December.*

A. 12- There is no doubt that students at BHS will be impacted during the construction process. Bret Daghe, BHS Principal, has been working with Meyer Najem who will be responsible for sequencing the project to cause the least amount of disruption. The most significant work, particularly to the core of the school, is being scheduled for summer and the breaks already built into the school calendar. While the plan is linear, the timeline can be accelerated based on the efficiency of the contractors. There are regularly scheduled meetings to keep everyone on track and to take advantages of ways to shorten the construction period. The safety of the students during this process is our top priority and will not be compromised.

Please provide an outline of your tentative plans to date.

(NOTE: Dr. Snapp provided a screen shot of their project schedule, it does not render well in the space provided, please see our website for this information.)

In the event question 1 passes:

Q. 13a- *Who will be overseeing both construction projects as a general manager?*

A. 13a- Should the referendum be successful, current planning calls for both construction projects to have Meyer Najem Construction, Inc. serve as Construction Manager as Agent, as permitted by Indiana Public Works statute. Meyer Najem has successfully overseen previous projects at Brownsburg, and would provide a Project Manager to oversee the overall administration of both projects. In addition, for each project, Meyer Najem would provide site superintendents to oversee the daily work, coordinate the efforts of the contractors on each site, and to ensure compliance with the bid documents. CSO Architects and their various disciplines (structural, civil, mechanical, electrical, plumbing engineering, etc.) will also be reviewing the work in the course of their professional services.

Q. 13b- *John Voigt currently holds a full time position with the school corporation. What arrangements are being considered to distribute his workload to other individuals (or similar actions) to other BCSC personnel?*

A. 13b- Should the proposed projects move forward a number of internal adjustments will be implemented to provide sufficient internal resources to work with Meyer Najem, CSO Architects, and the contractors:

- i. Day-to-day leadership within the custodial and maintenance areas has been developed in the form of Building Head Custodians and a Building Services Supervisor;
- ii. Robyn Maynard, BCSC Facility Services Coordinator, is expected to work with the Meyer Najem site superintendents on daily monitoring of the construction projects, as she has been doing on several recent projects
- iii. Mr. Voigt will continue to work as he has in the past in overseeing overall project goals, schedules, and budgets, in concert with Mrs. Maynard. He will report progress to the School Board each month at the regularly scheduled public meetings.

Q. 13c- *If redistribution of John's responsibilities to other BCSC person is under consideration, do those individuals under consideration have the work experience, and accreditations to successfully perform portions of John's work load.*

A. 13c- As noted previously, Mrs. Maynard has assumed a growing role in the day-to-day monitoring of construction projects at BCSC, including the renovation work at 310 Stadium Drive, and various other construction projects undertaken by the district over the past several years. Mr. Voigt will continue to work closely with Mrs. Maynard, and with Meyer Najem and CSO Architects staff, to ensure BCSC's project goals are properly addressed.

Project Cost Containment and Financial Reporting

Q. 14a- *In the event question 1 passes, this matter will remain of great interest to the public, as a great number of citizens expressed concern for transparency to ensure cost containment and independent oversight of expenses incurred on these projects. Given the amount of monies involved, what is the planned frequency and depth of reporting of these expenditures to the public?*

A. 14a- It is important to note that the public has oversight through its elected officials, in this case the School Board. The School Board is charged with oversight on this project. In addition, school employees are community employees, therefore are also charged with protecting the interest of the community.

The school corporation has strict state guidelines for reporting that exceed all other agencies and will adhere to those guidelines. Should the elected School Board desire additional reporting on an even more frequent basis, that will be done as well.



Q. 14b- *Are you planning on providing any information above and beyond standard reporting practices? If so, please provide as much detail as possible.*

A. 14b- Please see question 1 above.

Q. 15- *In the event there are unspent monies, what happens to those dollars?*

A. 15- Bonds will only be issued for the approved project and by statute can only be spent on what was approved in the project.

Q. 16- *What is "plan B" in the event both questions fail to pass?*

A. 16- It really isn't a plan, it is the natural result of no additional class space. Class sizes will increase with the potential of trailers at all schools, including Brownsburg High School. In addition to larger class sizes, students at the elementary level will no longer have art and music in rooms designed for that instruction as those teachers will have to move from class to class—think "art on a chart." At the high school level, students will no longer have science in lab classroom or access to a technology rich curriculum. Overcrowded hallways and classrooms will negatively impact the instruction teachers are able to deliver and will short change the learning experiences of our students.

Please go to our website for the complete list of questions submitted by the Brownsburg Sentinel and answered by Dr. Snapp.



Would you like to write for the Sentinel?

Contact us at 317.222.1543

BCSC School Board Reports - March 9th & April 23rd 2015

March 9, 2015 Board of Trustees for Brownsburg Community School Corporation:

Highlights from March written after the April meeting.

The Board commended freshman wrestlers and freshmen Tyler Mills for finishing 2nd and Nathan Walton for finishing 8th in their respective weight class at State Finals. Brownsburg will be guaranteed an automatic bid to compete with the best teams next year. Senior swimmers Cameron Howard and Kyle Baney, Junior Vince Partlow, and freshman Jack Franzman broke the school record in the 200 and 400 Relay while placing 1st and 2nd respectively at the State Finals. Individually both Partlow and Franzman each won 2 additional records setting four new school records.

Steve Bahr, representing Duke Energy, presented the district with a check for \$40,000 which will fund the cooperative program "Real Men Read". The program involves male volunteers ("MENtors") visiting a kindergarten class monthly and reading a book and giving a copy to each child.

Mrs. Megan Maloney Farrell spoke to the Board urging them to consider making Hendricks County Ag Day a part of the curriculum for 4th grade. She suggested the administrators and board members to attend the March 13th "Ag Day Village Experience" so they could see firsthand the educational benefits.

Dr. Hendricks received approval from the Board to transfer \$6.750 million from the Rainy Day Fund with \$2million for instructional salaries, \$250.00 for utilities and \$4.5 million for site improvements. Although not expressed specifically, I suspect the site improvement funds will be used for the expansion of the Early Childhood Center and roof and pavement repairs. The exact costs will be known when contracts with vendors are approved.

Superintendent Snapp spoke briefly about the upcoming ISTEP tests to be given to third thru eighth graders and had some children in tears from the furor. He also talked about the legislative budget process which is pitting poor school districts against fast growing systems in the battle for funds. At this writing we don't know the outcome of either.

Board member Phil Utterback expressed the concern of a local business fearing a large increase in property taxes if the referendum passed. Dr. Snapp stated that because the town makes areas of town TIF districts, property taxes in those areas are diverted from the school, library, and other services for use in infrastructural improvements it is necessary to find other means of funding the desperately needed building expansions. This writer reminds readers to first support local businesses whose property taxes go to our schools. If we all do so, we and the new residents moving to Brownsburg can help our local businesses cover this increase in their expenses.

The April 13, 2015 meeting of the Brownsburg Community School Corporation (BCSC) Board of Trustees Meeting clarified a couple of items mentioned in the March meeting. Primarily a more detailed explanation was given for part of \$4.5million transferred from the rainy day fund for Site Improvements. Classroom space in the Early Childhood Center will be insufficient in the 2015-16 school term. When the Center opened in 2005 approximately 85 students attended. The number anticipated in the near future is expected to be 250. This year the school provides 10 half-day sessions and 1 classroom for childcare which serves those students who need additional half-day care. The latter service is not state supported but paid for by the parent/guardian at a fee comparable to middle to low-middle charged by private day care. In the next school year 13 sessions will be needed. It has long been recognized that having typical children attending (paying tuition) as models enables those with academic needs progress faster and better. Test results back up this claim. It is my belief that when they enter regular kindergarten they will not require as much special attention allowing the teacher to spend more quality time with all the students. These children are enrolled when they turn three so

the number of classrooms and students can vary during the year. Also, no private pay child will ever take the place of the state sponsored child. The state required student to teacher ratio is 16 to 18 students with 2 teachers. The plan is to add 2 classrooms this summer toward Eastern Avenue. In addition plans for the site include more future expansion as needed. I believe the site will be designed to hold 2 additional expansions of 3 classrooms each when needed.

Assistant Superintendent Jessup discussed school assignments to undeveloped properties. Areas within the school district were listed as catchment areas and not assigned to any one elementary or middle school area. Once development is taking place, the students from that particular area will be assigned to a specific elementary or middle school. The Board approved that the children attending from the apartments sprouting up like dandelions near the intersection of 300N and Green Street will attend Eagle Elementary and East Middle School. The school and town were successful in preventing another 385 apartment community from being built. The amount of property taxes would not come near to covering the projected cost of educating the number of students that would be anticipated. The number of new apartments and houses has caused the ripple affect resulting in the need for a referendum.

Dr. Snapp comments included a rebuttal of the 25% increase in property taxes as stated on various signs around the school district. The actual fact is that the school rate is between 8.9% and 18% of the total property taxes paid. If a homeowner is under the property tax cap the rate will increase by 4.9% to 6.2%. If the homeowner is at the property tax cap the result will be between 10.5% and 13% increase. The average value of a home in the Brownsburg School area is \$146,000. The average homeowner in this case would see a \$7.72 increase or \$9.88 per month if he receives additional property tax cap credits. I figure this amounts to 2 Grande lattes at Starbucks, 20% of what it costs to fill the tank of my 9 year old Crown Vic, or less than a trip to McDonalds with my 4yr, and 6yr old grandchildren. Hopefully outstanding schools will have a positive effect on the value of my home should I desire to sell.

Other interesting items that were mentioned in the meeting are mentioned below. (1) Emma Hasek will be going to Carnegie Hall in June to receive a gold medal for her short story "A Road is Still a Road". She was chosen out of 300,000 entries submitted for the Scholastic Art and Writing Contest. (2) Shane Hacker, Assistant Principal for this year's graduating class, will be principal at East Middle School next school year. (3) The traffic engineer, Nathan Award, responsible for the redesign of the intersection of 900E and St Rd 136 at the railroad crossing is a 2002 Brownsburg High School graduate. (4) The Board approved a renewal to the Shuttle agreement with St. Malachy. (4) The Brownsburg Education Foundation raised \$60,000 and will award a \$31,000 scholarship.--Anne Sering



Emma Hasek Receiving Award



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We *strongly* encourage our readers to visit our website www.brownsburgsentinel.com for high resolution color images, videos of various meetings, frequently asked questions and answers, and detailed archives to place the school referendum in historical context.

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