

Questions and Answers presented at the Special meeting of the Jay School Board of Trustees at Pennville Elementary, February 7, 2017

The following are questions submitted to Jay School Corporation from parents, teachers, staff, community members prior to the February 7, 2017 meeting. Questions are in the left column, responses are in the right column.

Questions/Comments provided by Pennville Elementary parents,community, faculty and staff.	Responses
Financial Info	
<p>Why is Pennville being singled out? What is the total itemized list of expenditures for Pennville? A. How will these be recognized as a savings if Pennville would close? B. Wouldn't most of these costs be disbursed elsewhere? C. Most of the money saved by closing Pennville will come from <u>not</u> hiring teachers at other schools?</p>	<p>Declining enrollment at the Pennville Elementary Schools and the age and condition of the building has led the school to be considered for closure for many years. The declining revenues from the State coupled with diminishing cash reserves requires actions to reduce now.</p> <p>As we review the 2015 study of the school system's buildings and facilities the focus will not be limited to Pennville alone we will begin simultaneously looking at all the facilities.</p> <p>See graphic page 9-11</p> <p>The General Fund Costs directly associated with Pennville for this past calendar year 2016 do include the wages for the teachers (6), Principal (1), support staff (3), the related Sub teacher costs for that school site, and the associated benefits for these personnel. Total salaries are \$ 469,594 and total benefits are \$ 214,011 for a Wage/Benefit total of \$ 683,605. The other expenses for the school site are \$ 70,822. This all adds up to a Total General Fund total Cost for Pennville of \$ 754,427. (We do pay an additional \$ 36,533 for utility costs out of the Capital Projects Fund.) A closing of any school would over time result in a reduction of Teachers, Principal, and Support Staff around the district. Reductions (Layoffs) would be governed by the Reduction in Force (RIF) Guidelines.</p>

<p>Will the teachers and staff lose their jobs if the school is closed?</p> <p>Will closing school(s) recoup the funds we need? A. Salaries will remain the same wherever teachers are placed. B. Cost to add on to our schools to make room for more classrooms defeats purpose of closing schools when there is space at Pennville.</p>	<p>Just because a school closes, it doesn't mean the faculty and staff at that school lose their jobs. Certified staff reductions are governed by the Jay School Corporation Reduction In Force Guidelines which are based on the status of the teacher, evaluation, licensure, experienced etc. Non-certified are <i>at-will</i> employees and our practice is to absorb non-certified into other positions as are available, usually on a seniority basis. Administrator reductions are based on their length of contract and consideration of other administrative openings within the district.</p> <p>A: RIF is being considered and planned for across the district. If RIF, then salaries/benefit costs will also be reduced.</p> <p>B: We do not anticipate construction costs at existing schools in the event Pennville Elementary is closed. Modification costs are possible and being reviewed. Current class sizes in schools anticipated to receive Pennville students will balance to accommodate students without new construction costs.</p>
<p>General Fund is our salaries, they will follow us to other buildings and will not be a savings, so where is this BIG savings?</p>	<p>The savings in the General Fund will result from less Certified Staff , one less Administrator, and less Support Staff that will no longer be needed across the district. The less payroll and benefits associated with RIF (reduction in force) would yield savings. Reductions are also being considered in other tax supported funds and operations.</p>
<p>Still maintaining a building will cost utilities</p>	<p>Maintaining a school site for a short time will consume some operating costs on a short term basis until the building is disposed in the proper legal process. Currently, all Utility costs are paid from the Capital Projects</p>

	Fund (CPF).
Students	
Q: What school will kids go to if Pennville Elementary is closed?	It is our intention to survey parents of students currently attending Pennville Elementary and asking them their top 3 choices of schools to attend. We would then make plans to accommodate these requests subject to bussing, class size and facility considerations of the other schools
<p>Why can't we redraw boundaries to more evenly distribute the students. A. Pennville has seen two reductions while the other schools have had none.</p> <p>Why have we not redistributed students more fairly in the county? Enforce "first come, first served", then they go to building in their district</p>	<p>See graphic page 9-11</p> <p>Change school boundaries will not solve financial issues. "Money follows students" in the Indiana since 2011. There will be the same number of students/funds no matter where they go in the county.</p> <p>We try to accommodate working families. Many of whom have single parent households or both parents work. Also, childcare. We have had open enrollment since mid-late 1990s.</p> <p>Doubling the current Pennville Elementary Attendance District to the east would include 12 students from General Shanks and 70 from Bloomfield. This would add 82 students to Pennville bringing it to 164(doubling its current enrollment). This would put the school the same size as Redkey (165). This district boundary change would expand the Pennville attendance boundary to about 1/3 the size of all Jay County.</p>
Why would you consider moving Pennville students 2X with 2 moves if other schools are closed in the future?	We cannot promise that additional consolidations won't occur over time. Our current fiscal situation with a recent history of deficit spending and diminishing cash reserves call for actions to address these challenges.
Why not close Redkey and move those students here? We have open classrooms not being used, an historical gym, a	These considerations are based on building age, capacity, and class size balance, long-term serviceability of the building,

<p>basement with rooms.</p>	<p>educational programs, current and future population of students being served.</p>
<p>Where are the extra classrooms at Redkey?</p>	<p>Initial assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is being reviewed now. ● Additional classroom space has been identified. Space is also being reviewed at Westlawn and Bloomfield. ● There are 41% fewer students in Redkey elementary than in 2001.
<p>Other Uses</p>	
<p>Gym is used by high school students for practice, auxiliary gym is not available because it is full.</p>	<p>The Pennville Gym is currently used on a regular basis for JCHS winter guard practices on Friday evenings. The gym has not been used for JCHS Basketball practices on a routine basis in the last two seasons.</p>
<p>Summer meal arrangements for 80+ students</p>	<p>The Federal Summer lunch program has used Pennville Elem as a lunch site since 2010. This past summer (2016) Pennville did average # 35 students / day for this 7 week program of lunches in June/ July. Jay School Corp administers these Federal funds to pay for this program that employs one worker at this site, and provides for the funding for meals/ snacks for the students. Choosing the sites for the summer lunch program is allowed by the guidelines.</p>
<p>Bus drop off/pick up point for middle/high school, how will this be addressed?</p>	<p>We currently have middle/high school stops that are made after leaving the elementary. These stops would become K-12, they would be reviewed. For example currently students who live West of SR 1 walk to the elementary, that would change. Actual stops would be based on the population of students.</p>
<p>Longer bus ride = more money</p>	<p>Past and current practice for the school district is for students to be on buses no earlier than 6:30AM. Elementary 1hr max middle/high 90 min max. Exceptions in bad weather. Driver pay is based on a daily rate with a range of hours driven, the pay would remain at current levels even considering the</p>

	additional time. The increase in cost would happen if we needed to add the additional route for multiple elementary stops.
Questions	
Is there enough capacity at other schools for Pennville students? A. Pennville could hold up to 16 classrooms by using the basement and also by relocating the cafeteria to the back hallway and gym area as it was back in the late 70's and 80's.	Redkey had 279 students in 2001. Westlawn had 364. Bloomfield had 298. Current enrollments are much less and could accommodate more students in those buildings.
Will the teacher to student ratio be equal across the county?	See graphic page 9-11 A current class size review shows an imbalance among elementary schools. Our goal is to balance class sizes while accommodating parents as much as possible, while ensuring a great educational program.
What will the cost of busing be compared to now?	No additional buses are anticipated. Possible one additional driver (Transportation Fund). Unknown until parents surveyed and decisions made.
Will students still get on buses K-12 together or 2 routes in AM and 2 routes in PM? A. Where will students be picked up and dropped off if Pennville school is closed? Will students be picked up at one location or several locations?	We anticipate that our transportation plan would be the same, Mornings would be K-12, Afternoons would be K-5 early route, MS/HS on the later route. We would still anticipate the need to meet at a safe location to transfer rural MS/HS students, possibly elementary students depending on which elementary schools are utilized. Town stops would be used in the morning and afternoon for all ages.
Have we looked at how closing schools will impact students and families? A. Several families have commented that they would send their children to Montpelier, Southern Wells, or even home schooled if Pennville is closed.	We believe that the programs, vocational program, opportunities and quality of education in Jay County are what parents want. We trust parents to do what is best for their children when given all the facts.
Transfer of students-redistrict areas of county to make classroom sizes more equal. A. Students living in a designated area should	A. Currently, procedures are being

<p>have preference over attending their own school before transfers are handed out, even if the child doesn't register before the last day of school registration. B. Too many students are being accepted at some schools even when they say they are full. Why not bus to Pennville where they have extra classroom space?</p>	<p>discussed. B. See graphic page 9-11</p>
<p>Cuts that could be made: A. Money could be saved by cutting Reading Recovery from our schools. Reading Recovery is a good program but it doesn't service enough students. B. Libraries could all be staffed by an Instructional Assistant and only have one Librarian do all the ordering. C. Sports and after school activities should all be self supporting. This would cut costs quite a bit.</p>	<p>All are being reviewed. (People/Program/Buildings).</p>
<p>Why do we have so many textbooks that teachers do not use in the county? Technology is great, but textbooks cost money even if they are not being used.</p>	<p>Textbooks are not General Fund costs. We expect textbooks will be reduced greatly with the expanding technology. Current costs of textbooks are paid by Textbook Rental Fees which is a separate fund. TBR is reimbursed by the state based on F&RL</p>
<p>Why isn't Preschool and Latchkey offered at all schools? I know that it takes money and students, but some schools would keep their students in their homeschools if these services were offered. It has been brought to our attention that some schools are offered busing to other schools for latchkey, why not all schools?</p>	<p>Gen Shanks and Westlawn. Buses support as many families as possible existing with routes. Currently we have a program for each side of the county. It is cost prohibitive to expand beyond these two sites with available General Funds.</p>
<p>Any retirements incentives this year?</p>	<p>There has not been any current plan or funds allocated for early Retirement Incentives . The last wave of early retirement incentives was funded by federal stimulus funds in 2011 and 2012.</p>

<p>What will happen to the building if the school is closed?</p> <p>A: This would first be subject to Indiana law. Ultimately, it could be repurposed as a community center. This would be determined by the School Board and the level of interest in the community.</p>	<p>We have reached out to Pennville community leaders to discuss the future of the Pennville Elementary School building in the event the school is closed. A Community Center has been the most often mentioned purpose. Some have mentioned housing.</p>
<p>Will survey comments be compiled and released to the public?</p>	<p>It will depend on the survey. The current survey was intended to provide input not form specific public opinion on specific programs or buildings. People general have an expectation of anonymity unless the survey says otherwise. The Board of Trustees have full access to the comments provided in the survey to inform their decisions.</p>
<p>Cost Reductions</p>	
<p>Release 2016 itemized expense report. A. Review report for excess/unnecessary spending</p>	<p>Budget information is being provided on the school website.</p>
<p>Review annual budget to better align with current financial standing.</p>	<p>In progress.</p>
<p>Reduce administrative staff to meet current budget and enrollment levels.</p>	<p>Eliminated central office administrative position. Anticipated administrative positions eliminated if consolidation occurs. Reviewing others.</p>
<p>Close administration building and move all necessary personnel to JCHS.</p>	<p>Current Utility costs for the Admin Building are paid from the Capital Projects Fund (CPF) for a total of \$ 28,392. This expense is kept out of the General Fund.</p>
<p>Allow each school to host their own sporting events.</p>	<p>Being reviewed.</p>
<p>Work with nearby school districts to increase</p>	<p>Brad. In progress. Some already done.</p>

buying power for supplies/equipment.	
Reconfigure current bus routes to maximize efficiency.	Not a general fund cost. We continue to look at school bus routes, over the years we have absorbed routes. Pennville routes were studied this year with the possibility of two routes instead of three, but because of the distance travelled and the time needed to travel, we were not able to absorb. Some efficiency is lost in keeping our “ride times” at an acceptable level. Although we have lost student enrollment, the distance we travel to pickup students has remained fairly consistent. We still have families living in the far corners of our county. We also need to consider the town students that we transfer to MS/HS locations. So a bus that seems to be empty at a certain point in their route is needed to have room to transport those students.
Courses at John Jay to be moved back in house.	Planned.
Better utilize surplus equipment, etc. Use excess equipment at various locations rather than buying new.	This has been done. Not general fund cost.
Better utilize more cost effective facilities.	This is being planned for and acted on. For both General Fund, Capital Projects. This is also part of the consideration given to consolidation of schools.
Revenue Generation	
Target private sector funding to offset costs of various programs.	This is done through grants. These grants have matching funds (locally). They have very limited impact on General Fund.
Corporate advertising on school buses	Against the law.
Sale of unused/unneeded equipment	Have done. Doing now. Will do. This is “one-time” savings.
Increase number of Preschool options.	Cost prohibitive. No state funding directly.
Consider offering Latchkey options.	Currently scoped to what we can afford.

Reach out to the rural Amish communities to gain the many potential students from their families.	Trent - This has been done in over the previous 36 months.
Thoughts	
Unintended circumstances of losing children to other school districts	The loss of programs and quality of education due to cuts and reductions also puts at risk retaining students in the district and attracting new ones.
Economic and other impact to the local communities in which the schools currently reside. A. School closures are far more than brick and mortar decisions.	Agreed. This is why we are present in the communities affected by the decisions we make or do not make.
School closures should be an absolute last resort. A. If it does become inevitable, consideration should be taken to maintain at least one school in each of the current areas of the county.	This input is part of the active consideration by the Board of Trustees.
Be fair to all schools and students-if we have to cut, let's share everything. I believe in the long run we should have one big complex at JCHS like Adams Central, South Adams and Southern Wells. We could cut travel time for shared-teachers going to other schools and no mileage fees, just footwork. Shared subs would be able to go from one building to another and not have to even get into their vehicles. Forty five years ago people didn't like the idea of one high school; but they would get used to one complex and probably even like the high school, middle school and elementary being in the same location after a while. This way everyone feels the same about our school system and would probably like it in the years to come. They say it is easier to borrow money to build than to add on to some of our existing schools that have age to them. Then our leaders in the county could look for grants to turn our old school buildings into housing units like they do in the cities.	If student population continues to decline these options are increased in probability. Larger consolidation options were presented in the 2015 Facility Review. These options will continue to be reviewed, refined narrowed, and planned for.
Throughout the research and decision process we should keep in mind our number	Agreed.

1 priority; what is best for the students! A. Every decision should focus on this question "Is this what is best for our students?" It is easy to get caught up in the financials without taking this into consideration.

Class Size, Gen Fund Costs and Change in Enrollment Since 2001

	Bloomfield	East	Shanks	Haynes	Pennville	Redkey	Westlawn
Feb 2017 #s Student/Teacher (K-5)	21:1	22:1	23:1	20:1	14:1	18:1	18:1
# of student 2001	298	451	402	291	158	279	364
# Students Feb 2017	251	291	317	215	84	165	216
	-16%	-35%	-21%	-26%	-47%	-41%	-41%
Net Gen Fund Surpluss/Defecit	\$362,253	\$565,195	\$763,470	\$266,941	-\$273,370	\$105,561	\$212,002

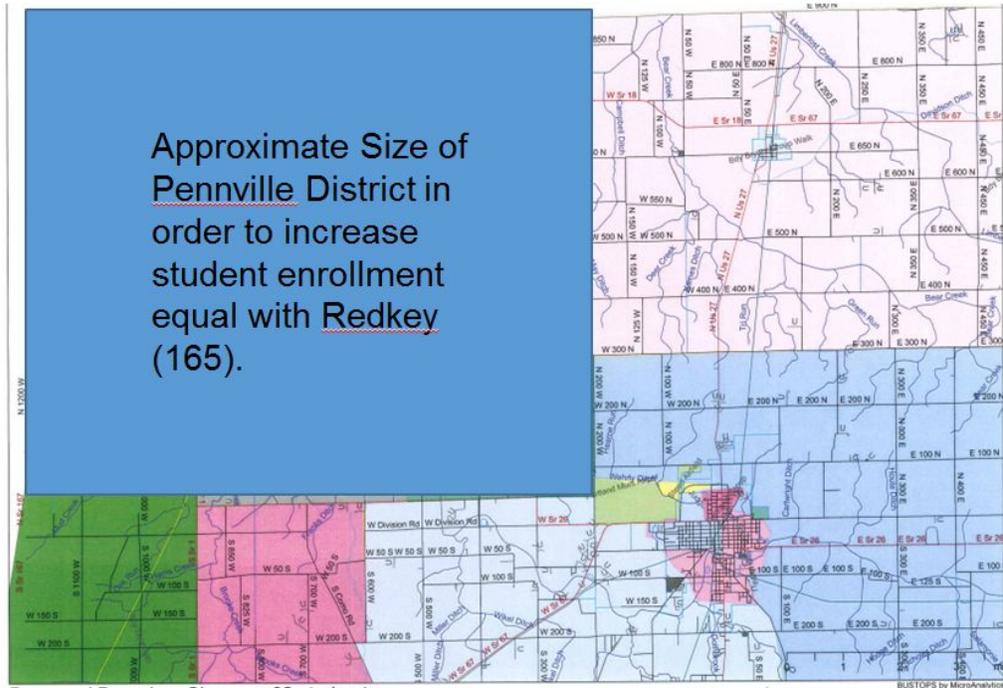
Class Size and Change in Enrollment Since 1965

	Bloomfield	East	Shanks	Haynes	Pennville	Redkey	Westlawn (a
1965 # of students/teacher (1-6)	Not Built	Not Built	29:1	36:1	29:1	28:1	31:1
Feb 2017 #s Student/Teacher (K-5)	21:1	22:1	23:1	20:1	14:1	18:1	18:1
	Bloomfield	East	Shanks	Haynes	Pennville	Redkey	Westlawn*
# of students 1965 (1-6)	Not Built	Not Built	370	430	347	279	502
# of student 2001 (K-6)	298	451	402	291	158	279	364 (K-6)**
# Students Feb 2017 (K-5)	251	291	317	215	84	165	216
% Drop from highest K-6 enrollment	-16%	-36%	-21%	-50%	-76%	-41%	-57%

Avg class size Grades 1-6 in 1965 = 31
 Avg class size Grades K-5 in 2017 (Feb) =19

Hypothetical Redistricting Scenario:

Expanding the current Pennville Elementary District east will pick up 12 students from General Shanks and 70 from Bloomfield. This would add 82 students to Pennville bringing it to 164(doubling its current enrollment). This would put the school the same size as Redkey (165).



	16-17	00-01	75-76	% change
Students in 7 elementary buildings	1539 (K-5)	2243 (K-6)	3059 (K-6)	-50%
Students in our 2 middle school buildings	756 (6-8)	581 (7-8)	990 (7-8)	-24%
Jay County High School	1058	1114	1709	-38%

	1975-1976	Feb 2017	% Change
JSC Enrollment Change	5859	3359	-43%