

Superintendent Defends School Building Program

Even though eight Columbus schools have been closed and 14 more may be closed, Superintendent Joseph L. Davis Monday defended the massive building program triggered by the 1972 \$89.5 million bond issue.

The defense came as he announced the \$1 million Northgate Elementary School, 6655 Sharon Woods Blvd., is ready for occupancy.

"IN RETROSPECT, I would not have done anything differently," Davis said.

He said the eight schools were, for the most part, in sections of the city where there once was a big population density. The schools had a capacity of 3,200 students, but were occupied by only 1,600 pupils, he said.

It was not economically feasible or efficient for educational purposes to continue to operate the schools, Davis said.

THE ELEMENTARY schools not reopened this fall were Alum Crest, Barnett, Bellows, Heimendale, Homedale, Marburn, Milo and Shepard.

There never was a bond issue as thoroughly researched or discussed as the 1972 bond issue, Davis said. The district's needs were diverse, he said.

At the time, Davis said, there were 60 classes of elementary pupils being transported elsewhere because there were no schools in newly developed residential areas.

THERE WERE nine to 11 schools on split sessions due to overcrowding, he said. Davis said the system also was faced with meeting new state requirements regarding vocational education and library learning centers.

Davis said he understands persons inconvenienced by school closings find that action difficult to accept.

Board Candidate, Mrs. Cook Trade Jobs

By Robert Sohovick
Of The Dispatch Staff

Columbus school board candidate William W. Wayson and Kaye Cook, president of the Columbus chapter of the National Association for Neighborhood Schools, traded jobs Monday.

Wayson, in a letter to Mrs. Cook which was made public, charged she is being "ill-used by propagandists," including some school board members, who are using her group and Citizens Against Forced Busing "for their own narrow political purposes, to manipulate and control the schools."

MRS. COOK responded, "Garbage." Wayson attacked Mrs. Cook in declining her invitation to debate Ralph Scott, a National Association for Neighborhood Schools director and a professor at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Wayson said he is scheduled to conduct a workshop on school discipline in Georgia Nov. 16-18.

The proposed debate was scheduled for Nov. 16 at 7:30 p.m., Mrs. Cook said, at a public meeting at Brookhaven High School.

"I AM AN intelligent person who can think for myself," she declared.

"The national association is trying to provide responsible leadership for those against forced busing."

"He is lying. I honestly wanted a debate," Mrs. Cook said. She said even though there will not be a debate, Scott will attend the public meeting.

"I DIDN'T order the busing or the racial balancing of schools. I will not be held responsible for what happens in September," Mrs. Cook declared.

"Citizens would speak out whether or not there is a National Association for Neighborhood Schools. Look what happened in Louisville and Boston where the association did not exist."

Referring to propagandists, Wayson wrote to Mrs. Cook, "Though it has been a destructive and losing cause for the past 20 years, they will sacrifice you, the children of Columbus and the peace and harmony of our community to prevent Columbus from learning from other cities."

WAYSON WROTE that a Louisville, Ky., newspaper has tied Scott to the Pioneer Fund.

The paper said the fund gets money from a foundation established by the late Wickliffe Preston Draper, a New Yorker who, it said, apparently thought blacks were genetically inferior to whites.

Wayson said he has heard the fund is supporting Scott's visit to Columbus and supports the National Association for Neighborhood Schools.

PAUL LANGDON, vice chairman of the Columbus school board and a director of the association, and Mrs. Cook said the local group in Columbus is paying for Scott's trip.

Langdon said the national group is always willing to debate the issue of desegregation. He contended Wayson is doing everything to avoid a debate.

Mrs. Cook said the Association has not received any money from the Pioneer Fund. She said the fund has provided \$30,000 for antibusing symposiums scheduled by Scott.

MRS. COOK said Scott provided her with an airline ticket to attend a symposium on constructive alternatives to forced busing held in Boston in

August. She said she assumed the ticket was supplied by the university.

Even if the fund paid for the trip, Mrs. Cook said the Boston meeting was attended by blacks, was not racist and the newspaper allegations about the fund have not been proven.

Langdon also attended the symposium. His expenses were paid for by the school system.

SCOTT, in a telephone interview Monday, said he assumed Mrs. Cook's trip was paid for by Pioneer Fund revenue channeled into university funds.

Branding the Louisville newspaper article "a smear," Scott said about \$30,000 in Pioneer Fund money has been used in the last 15 months to fund four antibusing symposiums.

Scott said the funds have not been used to support National Association for Neighborhood Schools.

He contended some of the persons making unfavorable comments in the article have Communist backgrounds or have been cited as belonging to organizations Communist in nature.

Lawyers Argue State Payments

The Ohio Board of Education's proposal that it pay most of the costs of buying school buses needed for desegregation should not be used to avoid other financial desegregation responsibilities, lawyers for the Columbus school board argued Monday.

In a memorandum filed with U.S. District Judge Robert M. Duncan, the city board's lawyers, Samuel H. Porter and Curtis Loveland, contended that the local system will not be able to pay desegregation costs without diminishing the quality of education.

THEY ARGUED that Duncan should order the state to pick up the costs.

Columbus school authorities have estimated two-year desegregation costs at \$12.3 million. Duncan has ordered both boards to submit by Nov. 9 a revised budget and a progress report on the preparatory desegregation phase he ordered started this school year.

Desegregation of all schools is to begin in September, Duncan has ordered.

IN MONDAY'S court submission, the Columbus board argued "the... evidence demonstrates that the Columbus system does not have the funds to implement the remedy which has been ordered by the court while at the same time insuring that there is no diminution in the present level of educational services offered to students."

The board advised the judge that, despite \$13.6 million in budget cuts over the past two years, the system faces a projected deficit of \$4.7 million. The 8.7-mill operating levy would provide some relief, but there is no assurance it will pass, Duncan was told.

The Columbus board said the state board is mistaken when it suggests that its request that the state pay desegregation costs seeks to escape financial responsibility for the remedy.

THE MOTION recognizes the proposition that the state has an obligation, not only to eliminate unlawful segregation, but to insure that there is no diminution in quality education, the Columbus board argued.

Elevator Funds Sought By County

Franklin County commissioners have abandoned plans to use \$25,000 in federal Public Works Act money to turn a building at 1824 Cleveland Ave. into a Linden area community center.

County Finance Director Don L. Brown said the commissioners abandoned the project after plans were firmed up to build a \$3.7 million community center on 30 acres of land at the northwest corner of E. 17th and Joyce Aves.

HOWEVER, HE said, commissioners have asked the federal government to transfer the \$25,000 in Public Works Act money to the county's proposed agricultural center on Alum Creek Dr. The commissioners want to use the \$25,000 to pay for elevators planned for the proposed building.

About \$373,000 in Public Works Act money is already committed to the agricultural building, Brown said. The elevators are needed to accommodate handicapped people.

BROWN SAID a combination of Battelle Memorial Institute Foundation and federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation money is being used to buy the land.

Plans call for about \$1.8 million worth of Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation money and \$700,000 of federal Community Development Act money to be used to erect the building. The remaining \$2.5 million will come from either the Economic Development Administration or a St. Stephen's Community House fund-raising effort, Brown said.

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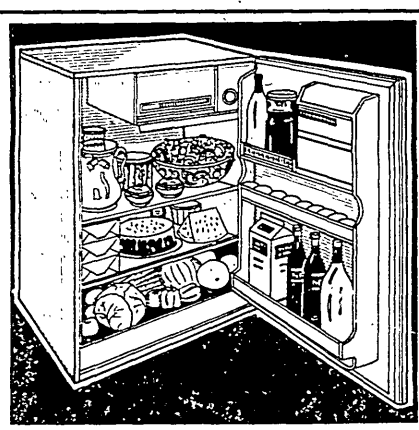
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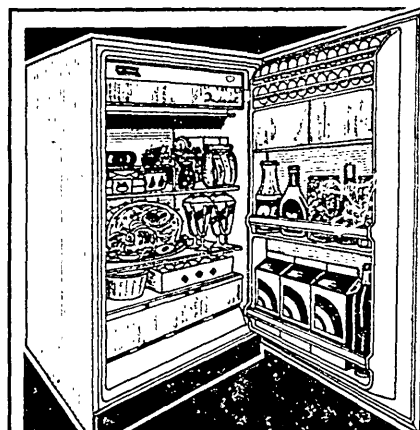
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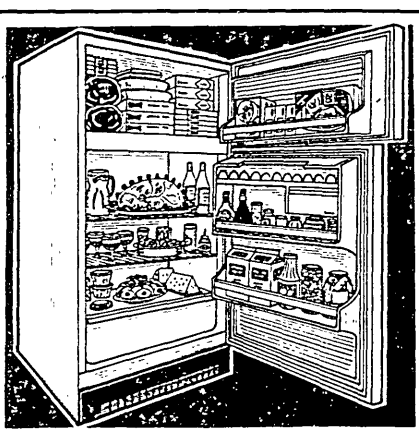
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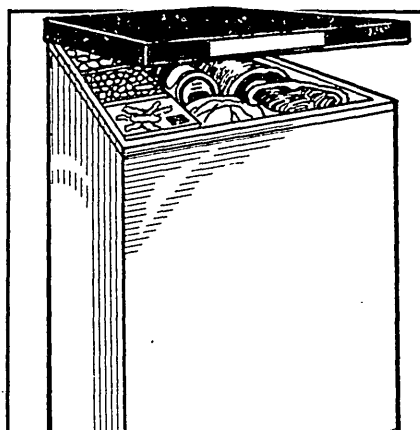
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