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School planning meeting short on attendance, long on ideas

Only a handful of people attended a community meeting designed to provide public input into a long-range plan for Hoopeston Area schools, but those there offered many comments, both positive and negative.

Dave Kietzmann, vice president of instruction at Danville Area Community College, moderated the meeting and will report suggestions to the board of education.

"What would you brag about," Kietzmann asked the crowd, who came up with several things, including:

- The music department
- Participation in community events
- K-6 education
- Good administrators
- Class size
- Buildings in good shape
- PBIS, a behavior program offered in the district.
- Availability of teachers to talk to parents when necessary
- Good grade school teachers
- Helpful and friendly building secretaries.
- Good finances
- Diverse curriculum
- A small town setting offering a lot
- Care for students



Marilyn Unger marks her priorities following a community meeting Monday at Hoopeston Area High School. Results from the meeting will be used to help school authorities with long-range planning.

- Good mixture of new and experienced teachers
- The ability to have full time specialists, such as music, art and P.E. teachers
- Good buses and drivers
- Good elective choices

See PLANNING on other side

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Police News



A **30-year-old** Hoopeston woman reported Monday that someone took her son's yellow Haro BMX-style bicycle from the 500 block of South Fifth St.

A **gold and orange** Mongoose bicycle was found at 11:30 a.m. Monday in the 600 block of East Penn. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

A **40-year-old** Hoopeston woman reported at 12:42 p.m. Monday that someone went in her home in the 600 block of South First St., overturned a couch and a

box of cat litter and knocked several items off a television.

Sherry S. Dillon, 22, of Hoopeston was arrested after an incident at 2:19 p.m. Monday at Parkview Court. She was charged with breach of peace constituting disorderly conduct on a complaint from a 28-year-old Hoopeston woman who alleged Dillon

failed to turn down loud music when asked to do so. Dillon was issued a notice to appear in city court.

The owner of Hoopeston Convenience Food Mart reported at 5:30 p.m. Monday that the driver of a white Oldsmobile Bravado failed to pay for \$15.18 of gas.

A **41-year-old** Hoopeston man reported at 11:21 p.m. Monday that someone scattered items around the floor

Planning continued from other side

- Alignment with DACC
- Good communication with parents
- Preschool program
- Sports camps
- The credit recovery program offered at the high school that allows students to make up credits
- STI, the program that allows parents to monitor students' grades online.
- Strong vocational program
- Strong technology

The group was equally forthcoming when Kietzmann asked what the district could do better.

The father of students currently attending Hoopeston Area schools said he felt "to a certain extent that we're rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic," citing pregnancies of middle school students, violence and drugs as problems. He admitted the problems "are not exclusive to Hoopeston by any means. It's a cultural thing." However, "I pick my daughter up from school. It's terrifying," he said.

The man said he and his wife are considering homeschooling "but we hate to leave our teachers."

The mother of former students said the district needs to offer more college preparatory classes, saying many classes seem geared to non-college-bound and struggling students.

Others thought more classes dealing with real life situations should be offered and perhaps mandated, such as home economics, child care and classes dealing with finances, such as budgeting and handling a checkbook.

Other suggestions for areas in which the district is lacking include:

- Some students not participating in any extra-curricular activities and the need for teachers and parents to en-

courage more activity.

- Cuts in teaching staff, resulting in larger class sizes
- Lack of parental involvement
- Weakness in advanced foreign languages
- Need for more vocational/occupational classes for students not planning to attend college
- Lowered expectations towards students in upper grades
- The drop out rate
- The need to find more qualified teachers and non-certified staff
- Too little involvement from the community and businesses in the schools
- The need for internships and D.O. programs at more diversified businesses.

At the end of the meeting, Kietzmann asked those attending to make checkmarks under the list of what could be improved and will submit those numbers to the board.

"Obviously, the school board can't focus on all of them," he said, asking each person to check the five areas most important to him or her.

"I think we will see a lot of these challenges in the strategic plan," Kietzmann said, adding several mentioned by community members had also been brought up by administrators and staff.

Weather



Chance of rain today and tonight. High 49, low 42. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy, chance of rain late. High 57, low 42.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

of his garage and turned over a table. The damage occurred in the 600 block of South First Ave.

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Girl Scout Troop 2204 is collecting nonperishable food items and toiletries such as deodorant, soap, shampoo, toothpaste etc., for the Grant Township Food Cupboard. Items may be dropped off at the Girl Scout Little House on Thursday Nov. 13 from 6-7 p. m. and Saturday Nov. 15 from noon - 1 p.m.