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Hearing Set On C'ville Proposal To Shift 430 Elementary Pupils

By MARIE MCGEE

A community-wide public hearing will be held in Clarenceville High School auditorium tomorrow (Thursday) night on a Board of Education proposal to equalize the district's elementary school population.

The hearing at 8 p.m. will climax a series of smaller sessions conducted by Supl. David McDowell and several staff members at each of the four affected elementary schools—Botsford, Grandview, Edgewood and Westbrook—to acquaint parents with the plan's details.

The board's final decision will come at the March 11 regular meeting.

If approved, the plan could save the school district thousands of dollars in administrative, construction and transportation costs, parents were told at the sessions also.

designed to help gauge public reaction to the plan.

SO FAR, McDowell admitted, public opinion is highly against the proposal.

"I suspect the board will leave things as they are for another year," McDowell told a large group of Botsford school parents last Thursday night.

Privately, he expressed disappointment at some of the nit-picking tactics used by some parents.

A major factor of the redistricting plan is the bussing of some 150 students, many from Edgewood School in the Redford Township area, to Westbrook school, in the Farmington Township portion of the district.

Besides easing the large enrollments of the other three elementarys, the transfer would give Westbrook two sections in every grade which it does not have at present.

The need to make a decision about future school improvements prompted the redistricting proposal that was drafted by the eight-member study committee of Mrs. Ruth Piller and David Kamish, elementary principals; Glen Silvernail, super-

visor of transportation; Harold Humble, assistant to the superintendent; James Leary, assistant superintendent; Melvin Kuehn and Dr. Samuel Prisk, school board members, and McDowell.

McDowell pointed out that before using any of the remaining \$1 million of the original \$3 million voted in 1965 for school improvements, it was necessary for the board to determine where the district stood population-wise.

FIGURES show a decline in the elementary school population for the future, McDowell pointed out.

"The board didn't want to add on to buildings if it didn't have to in light of this decrease," explained McDowell.

The boundary changes would mean present facilities could be expanded, thus saving the district some \$250,000 in new construction costs, he estimated.

It could also bring a possible annual savings of \$5,000 in transportation costs and a possible annual savings of \$18,000 in administrative costs. The latter would be achieved because a smaller enrollment eliminates the need for the assistant principal.

Congress Gets Dubious Grade

By TIM RICHARD

Congress as an institution gets a "B" for being effective, in the view of Jack McDonald, who is beginning his third term in the lower House in Washington.

Not an "A" for very effective. Not a "C" for mediocre, nor a "D" for poor nor an "E" for corrupt. Just a "B."

And, he adds, "I don't think any of us can settle for a 'B' with the lives and welfare of 200 million Americans affected."

McDONALD, a Farmington Republican, reflected on his career Monday just before addressing the annual Lincoln Day dinner of the 19th District-Wayne GOP organization in the Thunderbird Inn.

Now 38, McDonald had been a three-term supervisor of Redford Township before being elected to Congress with the "class of '66" led by then-Gov. George Romney.

"We incorporated a little of the worthwhile reforms in the Congressional Reorganization Act last year, but I must honestly say that the senior members of Congress only allowed small reforms—compared to what many younger members, myself included, felt were necessary."

McDonald today ranks No. 308 on the seniority scale in the 435-member House, and he says that "my effectiveness is much increased, first by my seniority, and second because I've had time to find my way around."

THIS YEAR he moved up four notches on the Republican seniority scale in both of his committee assignments. He's No. 7 on the Public Works Committee and No. 8 on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee.

"That leaves me in a very good position to be either chairman or ranking minority member of a subcommittee of the Public Works Committee, and possibly on the Merchant Marine Committee, depending on who controls the House after the next election," he said.

In a hurry, McDonald spoke for only about five minutes at the Lincoln Day dinner. He was bound for California to take part in Public Works hearings on the earthquake disaster of last week.

By background, McDonald spent nine years as a partner in a family construction firm before getting into full time politics, and he was negative about an idea President Nixon is reportedly contemplating—price and wage controls on the highly inflationary construction industry.

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pal at the three larger elementarys, McDowell said.

The balancing of the school enrollments would be done this way: Westbrook with its 184 students and several empty classrooms would have its enrollment boosted to 369.

Botsford's present enrollment of 650 would be trimmed to 561. The smaller enrollment would open up space for the expansion of the library facilities and the addition of a much needed learning center.

EDGEWOOD's present 670 students would be cut to 621. Library facilities here would also be enlarged.

The shift would give Botsford 534 students, compared to the present 692. A larger library area would be achieved.

The transfer would also put Botsford, Edgewood and Grandview nearer the 500 mark, which is the optimum

for elementarys, McDowell pointed out.

THIS IS NOT the first mass transfer of students experienced by the Clarenceville district. There were several during the tenure of former superintendent Louis Schmidt, it was pointed out.

But apparently this is the first time parents have had advance notice of transfer plans, comments from the audience revealed.

"I remember one year (during the Schmidt administration) when they sent home a notice with the report cards in June—and that was that," recalled a Botsford mother.

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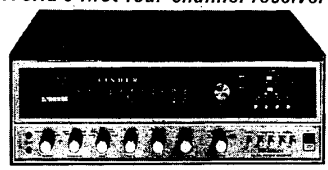
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