

### 1008 S. Cedar Ave

Built between 1909 and 1910 by Van Ryn & de Gelleke, the building was set to be called the new Fourth Ward school, however by the time the school opened in September of 1910, it was named the Jefferson School. The school building consisted of two stories and a basement, with four class rooms. By 1951, an addition was needed and added to the north end of the original building. At that time, part of the original tower was removed and the front entry was moved north to be included in the new addition, which consisted of three additional classrooms, one of which to be a kindergarten, a visual education room, and a multi-purpose room, all on one floor. By 2000, the school predicted declining enrollment and the need to close the oldest school building in the district. After much turmoil in the community over the next few years, Jefferson School closed its doors in May 2002. After looking at many options for reuse, and the cost of repairs that were needed the school district sold the building to Heather and Brian Conrad in 2004. Heather founded the business in 1998 after purchasing Tricia's Academy of Dance from her mentor and friend Tricia Marion and it became the Main Street Conservatory of Dance. And remains as a dance studio yet today.



*Jefferson School shortly after it was completed in 1910.*

*Photo from North Wood County History Society*



*Jefferson School shortly after the 1952 addition.*

*Photo from North Wood County History Society*



### \$18,000 BUILDING.

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### SCHOOL MEETING VOTES TO BUILD NEW SCHOOL HOUSE.

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The annual school meeting held Tuesday evening called out a crowd of four or five hundred people, filling the school building to overflowing. E. M. Deming called the meeting to order and was chosen to succeed himself as chairman. One of the most important actions of the meeting, acting in accordance with a recommendation of the board, was the vote to build a new school house in the Fourth ward at a cost of \$18,000. A resolution providing for bonds for the above sum bearing 4 1/2 per cent interest payable in eight years accompanied the recommendation of the board. Another recommendation of the board was an appropriation of \$16,500 with which to pay the running expenses of the coming school year. The report of I. P. Tiffault, treasurer was read and adopted. The report shows \$12,007.76 now on hand. The election of officers resulted as follows: C. S. Vedder, clerk; John A. Hoffman, Mrs. M. B. Cracraft

and F. A. Noll, members of the school board. The chairman appointed Geo. H. Reynolds, Louis Laemle and R. L. Kraus an auditing committee for the ensuing year to check up the books of the treasurer.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 08 Jul 1909, Page 4)*



#### **NEW SCHOOL BUILDING WILL BE APPRECIATED.**

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When the new 4th ward school building is completed it will allay the fears of many a mother whose children from that end of town are compelled to cross the railroad track going to and from school. On many occasions, as children will do to make the distance shorter, it has been the custom of a few reckless ones to crawl under the rows of box cars on Maple street, a most hazardous performance, as trains are liable to be switching there at any hour of the day. Central avenue with its two lines crossing there is another bad place as the coming and going of trains is often confusing even to older people. Although the 4th ward already has two school buildings they are so situated as to be of more convenience to the children of the 3rd and 5th wards than of the 4th. Therefore the new building which is expected to be finished yet this fall on a site no doubt east of Tremmel's corners is a wise move, as it will be in easy access to between three and four hundred children of the two wards south of the tracks It should also make property more valuable in that part of town.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 22 Jul 1909, Page 1)*



#### **Heating Contract Let.**

The school board closed a contract last week with the American Foundry and Furnace Co., of Bloomington, Illinois for a heating and closet system for the new Fourth Ward school building for \$2,005. As soon as the plans are received from the architect, work will be commenced.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 19 Aug 1909, Page 1)*



Plans for the new Fourth ward school were received this week. Owing to their lateness it is believed the board will defer building until next spring. Had the plans been received as expected it was hoped to have the building completed by the new year.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 16 Sep 1909, Page 5)*



### **Notice To Contractors.**

Sealed proposals will be received by the School Board of the city of Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin, until five o'clock, p. m. September 25, 1909, for furnishing all materials and doing all labor necessary and required to erect, construct and complete a two story and basement, four class room, school building in the city of Marshfield, Wisconsin.

All proposals must be for doing the complete work, including all of the several branches, except the heating and ventilating apparatus, for which separate contract will be let.

Each proposal must be accompanied by a certified check in a sum equal to five (5) per cent of the amount of the bid and made payable to C. S. Vedder, clerk. Said certified checks will be forfeited to the School Board in case of failure on the part of the contractor whose proposal is accepted to enter into a contract at the price stated in his proposal.

Time for, completing the work will be mutually agreed upon by the said School Board and the contractor to whom the contract will be awarded upon said contractor furnishing good and sufficient bond or bonds, acceptable to the said School Board.

Plans and specifications will be on file at the office of the Clerk of the School Board, in the city hall, Marshfield, Wis., and at the office of Van Ryn & DeGelleke, architects, 726 Caswell block, Milwaukee, Wis.

The said School Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to accept any proposal which it may deem advisable. Dated at Marshfield, Wis. this 15th day of September, 1909.

By order of the School Board.

C. S. Vedder, Clerk.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 16 Sep 1909, Page 5)*



### **CONTRACT FOR NEW SCHOOL BUILDING AWARDED.**

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Monday the school board opened bids for building the new Fourth Ward school building. Six bidders as follows furnished estimates; Chippewa Falls Construction Co., \$16,716; A. Nielsen, \$15,976; Hanson & Halle, \$15,404; Kraisen Bros., \$15,344; Thomas Wright, \$14,694; and W. L. Playman, \$14,035. The contract was awarded the last named bidder whose name is at Stevens Point. No doubt, owing to the lateness of the season, the only work to be done this fall will consist of excavating and building the foundation. The difference between the highest and lowest bidder was \$2,681 while the difference between the two lowest bidders was \$614.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 07 Oct 1909, Page 1)*



Nels Johnson has been awarded the contract of putting in 500 feet of sewage to connect the new Fourth ward school building with the city system.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 14 Oct 1909, Page 5)*



Work on the new Fourth ward school building is progressing finely. The foundation walls are laid and a large crew of masons will begin this week laying brick. Contractor Playman hopes to have the building enclosed and the roof on before cold weather.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 04 Nov 1909, Page 5)*



W. L. Playman who has the contract for building the Fourth ward school was called to Duluth last Friday by the death of his aged mother. Mr. Playman returned Monday and is hurrying with all possible speed in order to get the walls of the building up and the roof on before too cold weather. The heating plant will be installed this week.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 18 Nov 1909, Page 5)*



W. L. Playman who has the contract for building the new Fourth Ward school was in the city last week. He will begin work as soon as the weather permits.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 10 Feb 1910, Page 5)*



W. L. Playman, who has the contract for building the Fourth ward school building, was here last week and will begin operations again, soon.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 24 Mar 1910, Page 6)*



The new Fourth Ward public school building, the foundation walls of which were laid last fall will be hurried to completion. Contractor Playman hopes to have it completed by July.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 31 Mar 1910, Page 1)*



Contractor Playman who has the new Fourth Ward school building contract arrived last week and is now busily engaged on the work.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 31 Mar 1910, Page 7)*



The new Fourth Ward school building being put up by Contractor Playman is nearly completed. The brick and stone work was finished last week and now all that remains is the interior work. From outside appearance it is a very well constructed and neat affair.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 26 May 1910, Page 7)*



The new Fourth ward school building will be completed this week.

*(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 14 July 1910, Page 5)*



## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPEN NEXT MONDAY MORNING.**

The holiday season is over and next Monday morning the teachers and scholars of the Marshfield public schools will begin another year of educational grind. The opening day falls on Labor day but inasmuch as that occasion is not observed as a legal holiday it will be used for organizing. The new Fourth ward school having been completed some important changes will be made. This building will be known as the Jefferson school and for the present will be used as second grade work and sub primary. At the high school building the 8th grade room will be changed to a science laboratory room and the room formerly used as a laboratory will be used for a history and English class room. Following is a list of teachers in the different school buildings.

High School- C. W. Otto, principle; Lloyd C. French, assistant principal, history and physics; Alma Brown, science; May V. Dunn, English; Mary A. Dunham, history and English; Lona I. Berg, Latin and German;; Lucretia Van Zandt, mathematics; Ruth Parker, domestic science and art; Miss Barber 8th grade.

Grant Building- Hazel Brooks, principal, 6th and 7th grades; Lydia Hamm, 4th and 5th grades; Amelia Sorensen, 2nd and 3rd grades; Frances Ryan, 1st grade.

Washington Building- Nellie Henry, principal, 8th grade; Agnes Hermann, 6th grade; Irene Heule, 5th grade; Lucile Froede, 4th grade; Nellie Moesshler, 2nd grade; Elsa Maurer, kindergarten; Rose Bille, assistant.

Lincoln Building- Miss Gwin, principal, 7th grade; Irene Bradley, 4th and 5th grades; Lulu Rice, 3rd grade; Margaret Godfrey, 1st grade.

Jefferson Building- Josephine Bannach, 2nd grade; Olga Megorden, 1st grade and sub primary. (from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 01 Sep 1910, Page 1)



### **Important.**

All kindergarten, first and second grade pupils living south of the C. & N. W. railway tracks will report at the new Jefferson school building next Monday morning. Pupils in grades above the second will report at Lincoln or Washington buildings. C. V. OTTO, Principal.

(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 01 Sep 1910, Page 5)



## **SCHOOL YEAR OPENS WITH LARGE ENROLLMENT.**

According to the record kept by Supt. C. W. Otto, the enrollment for the high school and city schools to date is 806. This is divided as follows:

McKinley High school- Freshmen, 52; sophomores, 45; juniors, 47; seniors, 40. Of these, 71 are boys and 113 are girls. Total enrollment, 184. More are expected.

Eighth grade, High school- 32.

Washington school- 217.

Lincoln school- 149.

Grant school- 128.

Jefferson school 96.

The grand total undoubtedly will be larger by the end of the first semester.

(from The Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 14 Sep 1911, Page 1)



## **Action Is Started on \$150,000 Addition for Jefferson School**

The first official step toward building an addition to the present Jefferson School, 1008 S. Cedar street, was taken by the Board of Education at a special meeting last night.

On a motion by Dr. J. S. Vedder, seconded by Robert P. Felker, the board authorized Supt. Glenn D. Tinkham to draft a resolution to build the addition at an estimated total cost of \$150,000. Tinkham will draw up the formal statement for presentation to the board and then to the Common Council.

### **Modern Design**

The new addition will be built along the modern lines of the new Madison School and will be located on the north side of the present building. For the present the board plans to leave the old building intact except for the main entrance, when completed the building, with the addition, will have a temporary dual heating system.

In the past two months the board has discussed the possibilities of building the addition to conform to the lines of the present school or in the modern style of the Madison building. Various architects were interviewed by the board, with the plan submitted by the designers of the Madison School, Taylor, Foster and Yasko of Stevens Point and Wausau, being accepted.

### **Three Classrooms**

It was made clear at the meeting last night that no formal contract has been entered into with any architect, and the board is under no obligation to Taylor, Foster, and Yasko. The \$150,000 figure quoted for the building includes architectural fees.

Included in the addition will be three classrooms, one of which will be a kindergarten, a visual education room, and a multi-purpose room. The present structure has four classrooms on two floors; the addition will be all on one floor.



Tinkham submitted estimated enrollment figures to the board indicating the need for extra classroom space. The figures are for the fall term of the 1952-53 school year and are based on present enrollments and census figures for the past three years.

Broken down by grades the figures for all public schools are: Kindergarten 324, first grade 144, second grade 84, third grade 92, fourth grade 94, fifth grade 75, and sixth grade 78. Tinkham pointed out that the heavy load in the next, few years will be in the early elementary grades with a difference of about 100 per cent between the first and sixth grade enrollments. The board also approved payment of monthly bills totaling \$8,037.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 17 Jan 1952, Thu • Page 1)*



### **\$150,000 Jefferson School Opens to Public Thursday Addition Evening**

An opportunity to see the changes in school construction over the past 40 years will be presented to the public Thursday from 7 to 10 p. m. at the open house for the new Jefferson School addition, 1008 S. Cedar Ave.

At the open house refreshments will be served by a committee of PTA members under the direction of Mrs. Robert Korgman. Serving on the committee are Mrs. Rudy Anderson, Mrs. John Heintz, Mrs. Carl Dudley, and Mrs. E. J. (Mike) Senn.



*New addition to Jefferson Grade School, 1008 S. Cedar Ave.  
(News-Herald Photo)*

Arrangements for the open house are under the supervision of Mrs. G. L. McCormick, member of the Board of Education.

Integration of the new and old was the prime problem in constructing the \$150,000 unit. The completed project offers one phase of the history of education, written in brick and wood.

A five-room single story unit has been added to the 40-year-old, two-story, four-room school resulting in a complete elementary building with six grades, a kindergarten, play room, and visual aids room.

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A tower that once stood on the northeast corner of the old building was removed, producing an unbroken horizontal parapet harmonizing with the lines of the addition, and the exterior brick of the old building was matched in the new section.

When planning the addition the Board of Education and its architect, Karl Yasko of Taylor, Foster, & Yasko, Wausau, considered several plans including a two-story addition. In view of the high cost of any type of construction the board favored the contemporary design rather than duplicating the old structure and creating a "new" 40-year-old building.

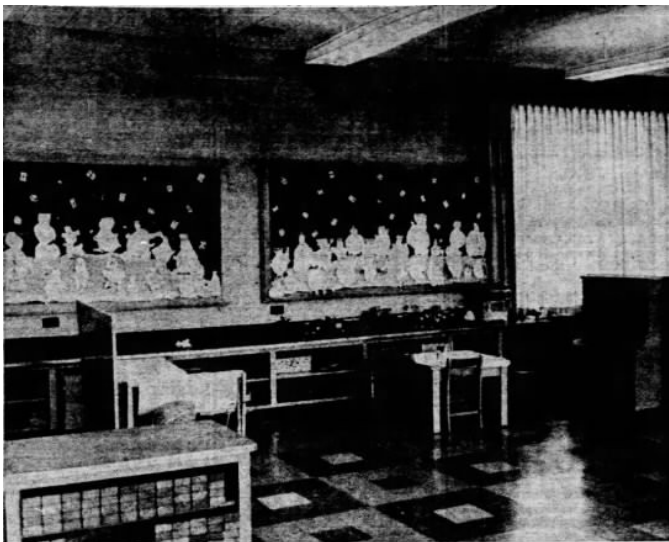
The addition was located in such a way that if, at some other time, another Board of Education is forced to raze the old section it can be done easily and rebuilt following the lines of the addition.

The new rooms are linked to the original building at the main entrance with two sets of double doors leading into the building. The sections can be shut off from each other by a concealed, sliding fir door.

A hand-fed coal furnace has been replaced with an oil burning unit, and what once was a huge coal bin is now a storage room and work room for the custodian. Block walls were installed enclosing the furnace room which has a fire - resistant ceiling and a fire door. The former unsafe furnace room was partially a passageway to a lavatory.

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A wiring panel was also relocated on the new basement wall in the furnace room, a fire alarm system was installed, and all the ducts for the heating system were replaced. The old coal furnace has been dismantled and will be used for replacement parts at other schools.



**JEFFERSON KINDERGARTEN** The kindergarten in the Jefferson School addition, much like other features of the new section. Is similar to the Madison School. Shown here is the play area of the room. The counter forms a U "on the left enclosing a large sink, and on the right is shown part of a large corner window section catching sunlight from the south and west. The \$150,000 addition will be open to the public Thursday from 7 to 10 p. m. (News-Herald Photo)

For their \$150,000, Marshfield taxpayers have obtained two new classrooms, first and second grades; a kindergarten that is a school by itself segregated from the older students; a large multi-purpose or playroom which will accommodate the entire student body, and a smaller visual aids room for showing movies to individual classes.

The entire addition is essentially identical to the Madison School which was completed in September, 1952. Foundation walls of the new building are concrete and a service tunnel housing pipes, hot air ducts, and wiring, surrounds the new section.

Similar to the Madison building, and providing the most obvious comparison with the old unit, are the lightweight concrete block walls of the classrooms

and the vertical fir planking covering one wall of each room and lining the hall. Another prominent feature is the amount of color that has been introduced into the new classrooms.

Decorating that was once uniform now varies from room to room creating the impression of "something different" for the pupil as he advances from grade to grade. Of course a playroom was unknown to the planners of the old school and visual education" at one time was the practiced use of a switch in front of the entire class.



*Jefferson School, summer of 1953, after addition is built.*

Added to the pastel colors on the walls of the rooms are the color combinations of the asphalt tile flooring. Shades of brown tile with coo s tr as ting feature patterns are used on all the floors except the playroom which has a red floor with white, inlaid strips marking a modified basketball court.

Artificial lighting in the main rooms of the new section are fluorescent units with louvre-slatted-bottom fixtures that distribute the light. A unique feature of these fixtures is the fact that the foot-candle readings are greater between the fixtures than directly below.

Complementing the artificial lights are directional glass block windows with aluminum ventilator sashes and clear glass in the lower sections. The five huge glass block windows in the playroom have directional block in the upper portions, above adult eye level, and diffusing blocks in the remainder.

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All of the ceilings are textured fiber glass, acoustical tile except in the playroom, which has a perforated metal acoustical ceiling between four laminated wood beams.

Built-in storage facilities are located in the various rooms. Wall space beneath the classroom windows is lined with book cases and project counters in the rear of each room have cup-

Boards underneath. Like the Madison building, each classroom has a large closet for the use of the teacher. The closets are equipped with cupboards and shelving.

In the new section first and second graders have built-in wall lockers in the hall for their clothing, and kindergarteners have a private cloakroom with divided sections, and benches to sit on while removing boots and leggings. The kindergarten cloakroom also has wash basins and two lavatory units.

Bulletin boards and green blasted glass chalkboards similar to those found in the classrooms have been installed in the visual aids room, which is designed to qualify for a fulltime classroom if needed. Blackout drapes have also been installed in the room.

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The kindergarten was built in the northwest corner of the addition and projects to the west in order to get sunlight through a large corner window. The sill is below the youngsters' eye level. Windows on the north wall are near the ceiling to allow a steady light to flow into the room. Below the north windows are individual storage cabinets for toys and rest mats.

A fully equipped kitchen with a serving counter adjoins the playroom. It is entered through a door off the hall. Sections of the playroom are designed for the installation of three folding and benches as in the Madison unit. The tables have not yet arrived and one folding unit was borrowed from the Madison School.

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The completed building was opened for classes Dec. 8. 1952. Prior to the completion of the addition a total of five grades were taught in the building with the second grade split into two groups, one section meeting with the first grade and the other with the third grade.

The bids for the construction were opened May 15, and the project was awarded to the Thomsen-Abbott Construction Company, Marshfield. on their bid of \$105,827. The bond issue for \$150,000 covers the cost of construction and equipment.

Forty years ago things were different. The old Jefferson School was completed in 1912 on a \$12,000 contract and a \$18,000 bond issue. The original building was erected on eight lots purchased in 1911 for \$1,625. An additional lot north of the school was purchased to make the new addition possible.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 27 Jan 1953, Tue • Pages 1 & 5)*



## Jefferson School a treasure

**Editor, News-Herald:** Jefferson School is the oldest public elementary school in Marshfield. It opened its doors to students in 1912. It is a treasure from the past in which all who pass through its doors are richer for the experience.

For the last two years I have heard School Board members and administrators talk about closing Jefferson School for such reasons as a decline in Marshfield's school population, budget concerns and the construction of a new two-track country school.

Jefferson School, our one-track neighborhood school, provides an excellent learning environment for its students. The staff strives to provide opportunities to meet all students' needs, such as all-day kindergarten, serving breakfast, F.A.S.T. (Families and Schools Together), obtaining tutors (through Big Brothers Big Sisters' and volunteers from the high school and community), fund raising to provide playground equipment and field trip learning experiences, and reading and visiting with our friends at Cedar Rail. Our children have an individuality from being one of a class that stays with the same classmates each year and eventually is taught by each teacher in the building.

Current research shows that small schools (fewer than 100 students in a building that is less than 2 miles from their home) relate to school effectiveness, community and school identity, and individual fulfillment and participation. On a wide range of measures, when students are part of smaller, more intimate learning communities, they are more successful.

Our treasures, traditions and memories are a reflection of who we are and where we have been. They also provide insight on where we are going. We need to preserve Jefferson school as a small, neighborhood elementary school. Our children are our future.

JEAN PARKER, Fourth Grade Teacher at Jefferson School, 1121 S. Locust Ave.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 06 Jan 2001, Page 7)*



## **School redistricting hearing set**

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### **Proposed Jefferson closing to be hot topic**

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By Bill Heath  
Of the News-Herald

Declining enrollments and restrictive state revenue caps are forcing the Marshfield School District to take a closer look at school boundaries and school operations.

Decisions could come to a head soon.

A listening session has been scheduled from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the School Board office, 1010 E. Fourth St Proposed Jefferson closing to be hot topic The discussion will precede the monthly Board meeting.

Redistricting will head the agenda. If enacted by the Board, it could result in a number of students attending different elementary schools and the possible closing of Jefferson School.

"Emotions run high when you start talking about closing a school," said Superintendent David Smette, who experienced those types of moves firsthand when serving as administrator at other districts. "A school building takes on a life of its own."

"Revenue caps are changing the way school districts have to operate," Smette said. "We are not alone. Other districts are facing these same types of choices." .....

.....Three options are on the table for discussion:

n Close Jefferson Elementary and move those students to Lincoln Elementary, which has 13 classrooms and is handicapped accessible.

Smette said he favors that choice because the two school district boundaries are close and this would maintain the "neighborhood school concept." And when East Fremont closes, Jefferson will be the only one-track school in the district with its seven classrooms. Jefferson, the oldest school in the district and based in a residential area, has limited parking and will need major roof and other building repairs in the next few years.

"Lincoln could easily absorb the Jefferson students," Smette said, "although a few of the students probably would move to Washington School."

Jefferson parents and staff have rallied around efforts to keep the building in use and will meet Monday night to plan their strategy. The school's Parent Teacher Organization has scheduled a 6 p.m. meeting in the Jefferson media center.

n The second option is to leave Jefferson open as a one-track school and Madison and Washington elementaries as two-track schools.

n The last alternative is to leave Jefferson School open and convert Madison School to a one-track school.

Under that scenario, students living north of Ives Street would relocate to Grant Elementary, a four-track school which opened its 26 classrooms in 1991. Students living to the south and

east sides of die Madison attendance area would go to Lincoln Elementary under this option, Smette said.

The other option of leaving the district boundaries unchanged and school offerings at current levels isn't feasible, the superintendent said. It would not meet the "staff neutral" requirement and ignores the additional classroom space at the new rural school he added.

If Jefferson is removed, the building could temporarily be used as an alternative school site, which is currently housed in a rented building in the central city, or perhaps as an early childhood center or for full-time kindergarten classes, Smette said.

The Board also will be discussing kindergarten options— all day, half day or some combination. A three-year, all-day kindergarten program at Nasonville and Jefferson schools has been successful, Smette said.

"Kindergarten is not compulsory," he noted. "So parents have a choice of whether they want their child to attend or not and, if so, for what part of the day."

The district now offers 12 kindergarten sections, including two that are full-day. The other 10 are half-day.

"We need to make decisions by February," Smette said, "so that staffing and space needs can be met."

If the district offers full-day kindergarten to all students, it would require hiring five teachers to join the seven who now conduct those classes, he predicted. Additional state aid, based on the number of students enrolled for longer periods, would offset those costs, Smette said.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 06 Jan 2001, Page 5)*



### **Parents oppose closing Jefferson**

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By Thom Gerretsen  
Of the News-Herald

Slowdown.

That, in essence, is what a dozen Jefferson Elementary School staff members and parents will tell the Marshfield School Board Wednesday night. They'll ask the Board to delay a proposed elementary redistricting plan in which the closing of Jefferson is the primary oppose closing Jefferson option.

I'm just baffled," said Jim Peterson, one of 40 parents who attended a strategy session the school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) held Monday night at Jefferson. "I haven't heard a compelling reason to close it."

"Why mess with what works?" asked Faye Ann Egger, a parent who noted that Jefferson students often achieve the highest state test scores among Marshfield schools.

The Jefferson contingent will also argue that its school is safer than others, is more open to experimental programs, and keeps youngsters in their own neighborhoods. They'll urge the

Board to consider "hidden costs" in redistricting, such as busing and a possible driver shortage. The group seeks at least a one-year delay in redistricting, so the Board can study these and other issues. The proposed redistricting would take place once a new rural elementary school opens on the site of the current Nasonville School. Construction is scheduled to be finished in May. After that, Chili's East Fremont School will close and its students will move to the new rural school, with many rural students who are now bused to Lincoln and Grant schools.

On Wednesday night, the Board will be asked to open the first phase of the rural school this fall, and to decide when the second phase will open. The board will then discuss the redistricting issue. The meeting's agenda says action is possible.

Jefferson Principal Barbara Buss told the PTO gathering that the district now has 12 tracks, or sets of kindergarten-through-sixth grade classrooms.

"When we add Nasonville, we'll have 13, but Dr. Smette said we could get by with 10," Buss said.

Superintendent David Smette said the district faces declining enrollments. Because of the state's restrictions on school revenues, he said the district must be ultra careful in the way it uses its space.

If Jefferson closes, its 147 students would move to Lincoln. Smette said he prefers that option because it would preserve the neighborhood school concept for the largest possible number of students. Two other options would keep Jefferson open. In those options, Lincoln or Madison school would retain its current two classrooms per grade while the other has just one set of classrooms per grade.

If Jefferson stays open, it would continue to have only one track. And that's fine with parents and staffers.

"We offer an intimate environment for our schools that is not offered in any other school in Marshfield," said Jean Parker. "Students have more opportunities to be in music and plays. They have more of a chance to show their individuality."

"They have a sense of value," said Char Smith. "They're not worried about competing at a social level that they have to compete with at a bigger school."

The smaller numbers of students and teachers makes "the kids more open to speak with adults," said Ann Bluhm. "They can go to any of these teachers and say, 'Can I have a ride home,' and they'd say, 'Yeah, Carl.' That's priceless."

National studies also show that students in smaller schools generally perform better than others, Buss said.

"This (the school) is the fabric of the neighborhood," said Shirley Mook, executive director of the city's Community Development Authority that operates Cedar Rail Court, where Jefferson students take part in a reading program with elderly residents. "If the school closes, you're taking away from our residents the opportunity to bond with these children, and vice versa," she said.

Buss said Jefferson is small enough to run experimental programs like SAGE (which provides



state funding to reduce class sizes) and all-day kindergarten. Jefferson and East Fremont are in their third year of a pilot program for all-day kindergarten. The School Board will decide Wednesday night whether to make the program permanent, and whether to extend it to other district schools.

"If you have all-day kindergarten, you'll need more space," Smith said. "Close Jefferson, and two years later you'll say, 'Whoops, we made a mistake.'"

If the Board approves the kindergarten concept, the district could receive up to \$520,000 per year in additional state aid by 2002. That would more than cover the cost of scheduled building repairs, which is another reason cited for closing the school.

A tentative long-range building improvement plan calls for a new roof and tuckpointing of the building in 2007. Those \$115,000 projects are part of a district-wide building plan that would cost an estimated \$3.3 million between 2003 and 2007.

Parker said Jefferson has enjoyed working in a permanent building, while Washington, Lincoln and Madison have resorted to relocatable classrooms to handle their needs. The building plan calls for all three relocatable classrooms to be removed and demolished by 2007.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 09 Jan 2001, Pages 1 & 7)*



### **Jefferson Reprieve! Board delays redistricting**

Elementary school saved for at least 1 year

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By Thorn Gerretsen  
Of the News-Herald



News-Herald photos by Ross Gordon

*JEFFERSON FOURTH GRADER Stephanie Leonard holds a sign in protest of the possible closing of her elementary school.*

The fate of Jefferson Elementary School will stay up in the air for at least another year.

The Marshfield School Board voted 4-2 Wednesday night not to move a second set of elementary grades into the new rural school at Nasonville until at least the fall of 2002.

Because of that decision, the Board was able to delay creation of new elementary school boundaries that would reflect the larger school at Nasonville. That means the district will keep its current elementary boundaries — including those for Jefferson — at least through the 2001-2002 school year.



*MARLENE STUELAND, Francis Bohon and Steve Schulte listen Wednesday as concerned parents and students voice opinions about closing Jefferson Elementary.*

"Seven teachers in the district will go to Nasonville, and the kids in those classrooms will go somewhere else," said Board president Steve Schulte.

The real question is the source of those teachers and students. The Board was not in the mood to make that kind of decision Wednesday night.

Earlier in the evening, about 225 people filled the Junior High School cafeteria for a public hearing on the issue. Most applauded as about 15 people asked that Jefferson stay open. Only about 40 people — mostly school staff members and Jefferson parents — stayed for the Board's discussion and decisions.

The word "Jefferson" did not pass anyone's lips during the Board's debate. The real issue debated was when the new \$3 million school at Nasonville would be ready for occupancy.


The first building phase will be finished this coming May. The Board voted 6-0 to merge Nasonville's current students and those from East Fremont into the rural school this fall. East Fremont would then close. The second and final phase of the new school would be finished by November 2001. The question was whether to wait until the following school year to move a second set of kindergarten-through-sixth graders into what will be a two-track school.

"To leave that second track empty, when it could be occupied by the second semester (January 2002) would be negligence," said Board member David Meissner. "That would not be good business sense."

"Kids don't need to be re-routed in the middle of the year" said Board member Carol Phillips. To wait until the start of the 2002-2003 school year "makes for a smoother transition," said

said Board member Francis Bohon. "And it buys us more time for the redistricting."

Administrators recommended three redistricting options that take into account the additional students moving to Nasonville and an expected decline in district enrollment. One option was to close Jefferson currently the only elementary school with just one set of grades (or track). These students would then move to Lincoln. A second option was to have only one track instead of the current two at Lincoln. The last option would do the same thing at Madison instead of Lincoln.



## The VOTE

The Marshfield School Board voted 4-2 Wednesday night not to fully open the new elementary school at Nasonville until fall 2002. This delayed a decision on redistricting and on possible closure of Jefferson School.

<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Carol Phillips	Steve Schulte
Bob Greifenhagen	David Meissner
Marlene Stueland	<b>ABSENT</b>
Francis Bohon	Dennis DeVetter

Phillips said the administration should look at projected enrollments from another angle before making any recommendation.

Instead of just dropping a track, she said the district should carry out its plan to move students from Grant and Lincoln into the new rural school and then see what's left at the other buildings.

"Give us hard numbers on what this means for the third grade at Washington or the fifth grade at Lincoln," Phillips said. "I'd like harder data on what will be affected."

Schulte said the district has those numbers now. And the sooner a decision is made, the better that parents will be able

to plan their children's educational futures in the district.

He said the Board could choose to do nothing, which would result in individual classrooms closing one-by-one as enrollments drop, and then reopening later if enrollment upsurges occurred.

"There is going to be chaos over the next four years," Schulte said, "or we can bite the bullet right now. There is going to be pain. There is going to be pain one big time, or we can dole it out for three to four years. I'm in favor of doing it once."

Superintendent David Smette, who said he preferred the Jefferson closing, agreed that the Board should settle on a redistricting plan soon.

"Parents need to know," he said.

During the public hearing, parents said Jefferson's small size creates a safer environment, more personal attention for students and higher test scores.

"A vote to dispose of Jefferson is to dispose of the values that you hold dearly," said Char Smith.

"This school feels like a second home to us," said Rebecca Preston, 10, a fourth-grader at Jef-

son. "We have the same friends. We don't have to get new friends every year."

Ann Bluhm, a parent, submitted petitions with 164 signatures that she gathered Tuesday and Wednesday in support of Jefferson.

"The walk to Lincoln School would be very dangerous," said Bluhm, who noted that students in the Jefferson area would have to cross a busy Peach Avenue to reach Lincoln.

Chris Egger questioned the notion that enrollments would decline. He said development of the north side shopping zone, the Near East Boulevard and the Mill Creek Business Park are indications that Marshfield is growing.

"You might be short a school" Egger said. "And that could be a serious Problem."

The Board did not set an exact timetable for addressing the redistricting issue.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 11 Jan 2001, Pages 1 & 7)*



### **Jefferson fate near**

Board will vote Wednesday on school's closure

— — —

By Thorn Gerretsen  
Of the News-Herald

The Marshfield School Board will decide Wednesday night whether to close Jefferson Elementary School in the spring of 2002.

The proposal is on the agenda for a meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Board of Education office, 1010 E. 4th St.

The issue is coming to a head much sooner than many parents of Jefferson students expected. However, the Board's Buildings and Grounds Committee said the decision should be made as soon as possible, so that other issues involving the moving of Marshfield's elementary school boundaries can be settled by the time the new rural school at Nasonville fully opens in the fall of 2002.

"Simply, it's time to move forward," Committee Chairman Dennis DeVetter said Monday. His panel recommended March 2 that Jefferson, 1008 S. Cedar Ave., be closed and that the building — the oldest in the district — be sold.

"I guess we felt that the administration, as well as the committee, had explored numerous alternatives of how to phase in the second track at Nasonville, and we've been looking at that for quite a number of months," DeVetter said.

Even if the decision is made now to close Jefferson, he said "there certainly needs to be more planning (about elementary restricting). There's a lot of work."

Jefferson Principal Barbara Buss said she has not heard very much from parents about Wednesday's possible Board action.

"I'm not sure if they realize that it's imminent," Buss said Monday. "I personally haven't had

like that in the city."

Buss said that residents of Cedar Rail Court — one of the Community Development Authority's two high-rise housing complexes for the elderly — still strongly support the idea of keeping Jefferson open. Students take part in a reading program with the residents.

Buss also said Jefferson has benefited from having lower class sizes in kindergarten and first grade as a result of the state's SAGE program.

The program provides state aid for adding teachers that make lower class sizes possible.

However, Gov. Scott McCallum has proposed in his 2001-03 state budget that SAGE not be expanded beyond first grade except in districts with high poverty levels.

"We were hoping next year to include second grade," Buss said. "That would have helped us."

Buss said she had no idea how the Board might vote Wednesday on the fate of her school.

"I don't know what will happen," she said. "It's so up in the air."

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 13 Mar 2001, Pages 1 & 12)*



### **Jefferson Survives—Concerns linger after Board votes 4-2 to keep elementary school open**

By Thorn Gerretsen  
Of the News-Herald

Parents of Jefferson Elementary students are happy that their school will stay open, but Marshfield School Board members are left to wonder how they'll pay the bills.

Most of the 35 parents and school staff members in Wednesday night's audience applauded after the Board voted 4-2 to reject a recommendation from its Buildings and Grounds Committee to close Jefferson after the 2001-2002 school year.

"This was not the vote I expected, but I was happy that the Board had the courage to look at what's best for the district," said Char Smith, a former officer of Jefferson's Parent Teacher Organization, who headed up the parents' campaign to save the school.

Board President Steve Schulte said the district would have to find a way to maintain the 90-year-old school, pay an extra set of teachers, and still deal with expected enrollment declines that he said could cost Marshfield about \$1 million per year in state aid.

"We cannot arbitrarily cripple ourselves," Schulte said.

Board members Frances Bohon, Carol Phillips, Bob Greifenhagen and Marlene Stueland voted in favor of keeping Jefferson open. Dennis DeVetter and David Meissner voted to close it. Schulte abstained for "personal reasons."

DeVetter, who chairs the Buildings and Grounds Committee, cited two reasons for the proposed closing: declining enrollments and budget constraints.

"We simply will not have enough students to fill all the schools," DeVetter said.

Superintendent David Smette has said that Marshfield could lose as many as 112 students per

year over the next five years.

"And we'll have fewer dollars," DeVetter said. "The community must understand that the state law allows district costs to rise faster than district revenues each and every year," referring to the state-mandated revenue limits that have been in effect since 1993.

"Do we want to cut a building or do we want to cut programs? That's how I look at it," Meissner said.

Phillips said she was

"willing to gamble" that the district would find the funds to keep Jefferson open.

"We're not talking about just a building." Phillips said, noting that Jefferson has tried special programs such as all-day kindergarten and SAGE, a state-funded program that reduces class sizes.

"The parents have taken ownership of the school," Stueland said. "They'll have a grieving period (if it was to close)."

Once the new rural school that's under construction at Nasonville opens in the 2002-2003 school year, a second set of kindergarten-through-sixth grade teachers will locate there.

When that happens, Schulte said district could do one of two things: reduce the number of teachers in the city's elementary schools by seven, or shell out about \$400,000 to cover additional salaries and benefits.

He said that by closing Jefferson the seven city teachers would be cut and maintenance costs would be saved. The district plans to spend almost one-quarter million dollars to replace Jefferson's roof and to tuckpoint its bricks.

DeVetter said extra maintenance dollars would be needed to fix a roof drain problem that took place this winter.

"It's a headache for maintenance," Meissner said.

"Yes, it's getting old, and isn't that wonderful?" asked Shirley Mook, head of the city's Community Development Authority. She spoke in support of Jefferson on behalf of elderly residents at the authority's Cedar Rail Court, who take part in a reading program with Jefferson students.



*A SKEPTICAL Frances Bohon, who voted to keep Jefferson School open, listens to the arguments of fellow school board member David Meissner. He was arguing to close the school.*  
News-Herald photos by Dan Young

Bohon said it was possible that the enrollment projections may not be realized, and therefore the Board should keep all of its options open.

"Our plan has to allow for enough flexibility," Bohon said. "Maybe we take a track (one set of K-6 classes) out of Madison school, and we put an early childhood program in there. I might prefer to close a track at Madison and accomplish the same thing (as closing Jefferson). We have to realize that there's a domino effect."



"The dominoes fell a long time ago," Schulte said. "When you voted for Nasonville, you set up this meeting."

News-Herald photo by Dan Young  
*BOARD PRESIDENT Steve Schulte, left, engages in a lively discussion with fellow board member Frances Bohon (not shown) about the consequences of building at Nasonville and its effect on the possible closing of Jefferson.*

Stueland disagreed, saying that the Board had decided two months ago to take a comprehensive look at the district's future needs before making any decisions.

"We've looked at all the options," Schulte said.

"To me, Plan B is over the next 90 days to put together a budget (for the 2001-2002 school year) that finds ways to cut costs," DeVetter said after the meeting. "We'll have to look at new areas to find savings, and the same will be true the following year with another \$1 million in lost revenue."

Still, Smette and the Board members were not surprised that they didn't close Jefferson.

"It's a very difficult process," Smette said.

Also Wednesday night, the Board voted 6-0, with Schulte abstaining, to approve a "long-range guide" for the future use of school facilities. The Buildings and Grounds Committee proposed the plan in February.

It included a study of a possible middle school in which sixth graders would move from their elementary schools to the junior high school. That will free up space in the elementary schools for things like all-day kindergarten, DeVetter said.

Bohon said she hoped the middle school concept would result in closing the relocatable classrooms built to provide library and special education facilities, as well as relieve space crunches at Madison, Lincoln and Washington schools. Greifenhagen expressed the same concern.

The Board also agreed to refinance a 1990 bond issue that was used to build Grant Elementary School. The interest cost will be reduced from 5.5 percent per year to 4.3 percent, said Dave DeYoung, bond counsel for Hutchinson, Shockey, Erley and Co. of Milwaukee. He said the district would save about \$62,000 per year for the next nine years.



The 2001-2002 school calendar was also announced. Classes will begin Sept. 4 — the day after Labor Day — and will end June 7, 2002. The calendar must still be ratified by the Board and the Marshfield Teachers Association as part of the union's upcoming contract.

The Board also recognized Mary Krohn, a speech and language pathologist, and Gerry Krueger, who chairs the Foreign Language department at the senior high school, for their longtime service to the district.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 15 Mar 2001, Pages A1 and B4)*



### **Board Votes to Close Jefferson**

— — —

By C.E. Hanifin  
Of the News-Herald

Jefferson Elementary School will close at the end of the 2001-2002 school year, the Marshfield School Board decided Wednesday at their monthly meeting.

A vote last March to keep the school open despite declining enrollment was rescinded Wednesday because enrollment this year has further declined.

Kindergarten classes were eliminated at the school last May due to low pre-enrollment, and the first and second grade classes also are smaller than anticipated, said Marshfield School District Superintendent Dave Smette.

The 115 students currently attending Jefferson will be transferred to the four other elementary schools within Marshfield city limits, and the teaching staff will be offered the option to transfer to Nasonville Elementary School, said Barb Buss, principal of Jefferson. She also serves as Nasonville's principal, and will continue to do so after Jefferson closes.

Six of the seven board members voted to close the school, all noting their deep regret. Robert Greifenhagen cast the single "no" vote, commenting, "I still don't believe it's time yet."

During the pre-vote discussion, he suggested slowly phasing out classes at Jefferson, beginning with the first and second grades.

Closing Jefferson constitutes the most efficient use of school district resources, said board member Dennis DeVetter. Although plans have not yet been made for the building, selling it is an option, he said.

Board members decided to vote on the issue Wednesday so that staff, parents and students would have adequate time to make the transition to other schools, Smette said. Partly because of changing demographics in the neighborhood surrounding Jefferson, enrollment has decreased the past few years and is projected to continue declining, he said.

About 100 rural students currently attending the four other Marshfield elementary schools will transfer to Nasonville next year when construction is completed, leaving room for the Jefferson students, Smette said.

"This was not an easy decision by any means," he said. "Jefferson has a long history of provid-

ing students with an excellent, excellent education."

Board member Marlene Stueland, who voted in March to keep Jefferson open, was among those who reversed her decision.

"I would have voted differently nine months ago if I knew then what I know today," she said. "It pains me to think that we're going to shuffle these kids around ... but we are a business, and business needs to go on. It's not going to be good operation to keep Jefferson open."

Although no parents of Jefferson students attended the meeting, Buss and three teachers were present. Parents and staff who attended a listening session with school board members held Monday at Jefferson were informed that a vote on whether to close the school could be made Wednesday, Buss said.

Buss will meet with the Jefferson staff today to announce the decision, and a note will go home to inform parents.

Buss said last year she had hoped for a vote to prevent Jefferson from closing, but after witnessing the low enrollment this year, she realized that it would be disadvantageous for the board to keep the school open.

"I feel disappointed to see the school close," she said. "The staff and parents have really bonded as a family, and that will be difficult to give up."

Charlotte Smith, a former treasurer of the Jefferson Parent Teacher Organization whose son attended kindergarten through sixth grade at the school, watched the vote Wednesday on channel 3, a community access station.

"I was just sick because I knew in my heart that the school was going to close after they decided not to have a kindergarten class last May," said the Marshfield resident. "I live in the community, and Jefferson is an integral part of it. The school board is fooling themselves if they think that feeling at Jefferson can be duplicated at another school."

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 11 Oct 2001, Pages 1 & 2)*



### **Jefferson not up for landmark status**

Jefferson Elementary School will not be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, according to the president of Marshfield's Historic Preservation Association.

"Because the front of the building has been so altered, Jefferson will not qualify," Shirley Mook said Wednesday night.

The facility, which is about 90 years old, will close at the end of 2001-02 school year because of declining enrollments. The School Board must still decide what the school district will do with the building.

Mook made her comments during a reception in which the Marshfield Area Community Foundation awarded grants for local service projects. The Historic Preservation Association received money from the association's charitable fund that was established by Stanley and Violet Custer.

"We will continue the preservation of this community," Mook said. "We may seek to put another building on the national register."

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 08 Nov 2001, Page 6)*



**JEFFERSON SCHOOL FAREWELL**  
**Saturday, May 18, 2002 • 11:00 - 1:00**  
**1008 S. Cedar, Marshfield**

This is your chance to see the school one last time before the doors close and the classrooms are emptied.

*"Say goodbye to the school but not to your memories."*

Refreshments will be served.

We are requesting old school pictures for display.

**Please call 384-4909**

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 13 May 2002, Page 14)*



many phone calls."

In January, school officials announced several options for elementary redistricting to coincide with the full implementation of the rural school which will have two tracks, or two classes per grade. Presently, Nasonville and East Fremont School in Chili combine to make up one track. East Fremont will close this spring and its students will move to the new rural school in the fall.

Faced with heavy opposition from Jefferson parents, the School Board voted in January to keep the current elementary boundaries through the 2001-02 school year, and take at least some time to study all the issues involved. Last month, the Board set the boundaries for the new rural school.

"We kind of felt that we would have at least a year to show how we could keep Jefferson going," said Jean Parker, a fourth grade teacher at the school. "And we had a lot of support from the community and alumni who wanted to donate money" to the cause.

Superintendent David Smette said that of the available options, it made the most sense to close Jefferson. He reiterated that stand Monday.

"Somewhere, there needs to be a reduction of a track (one set of kindergarten-through-sixth grade classrooms) in the city," Smette said, not just because one track is being added in the rural area, but also because the district expects declines in enrollments in the coming years.

Smette told the Marshfield Noon Rotary Club last week that school census counts predicted a 15 percent enrollment drop statewide within the next five years.

He said Marshfield could lose as many as 112 students in the next four years, resulting in a total loss of \$770,000 in student aid from the state.

The superintendent also said that the closing option would preserve the neighborhood, school concept for the largest possible number of students.

He said that most of Jefferson's 147 students would move to Lincoln Elementary School. And he said about 10 Jefferson students who live west of Central Avenue would most likely be transferred to Washington Elementary, so they would no longer have to cross the busy four-lane highway to get to school.

Smette also said that Jefferson draws from a much smaller portion of the city than each of the four other elementary schools Lincoln, Washington, Madison and Grant. He said the situation would change if Jefferson is closed.

"When you look at how the city is made up, it's basically in four quadrants. These are natural boundaries that make sense," the superintendent said.

Smette also argued that Jefferson faces more repairs than other district schools because of its age. A tentative long-range building plan calls for a new roof and tuckpointing of the building in 2007.

In arguing their case in January, Jefferson parents argued that the school's smaller size creates a stronger learning environment, more opportunities to be in extra-curricular activities, more chances to try innovative things, and is safer for students than other schools.

"It's just a good learning environment," Parker said. "There wouldn't be any other one-track situations

### **School transition has been successful**

Editor: As the end of the first semester is nearing I thought that now would be a good time to extend my thanks to the Jefferson School past principle, Mrs. Barbara Buss, and current principle of Lincoln School, Mr. Todd Felhofer.

The decision made by the Marshfield School Board last year to close Jefferson Elementary School was hard felt by every parent and teacher. The uncertainty that was ahead for the children, teachers and families was unnerving. To help prepare for the transition, the children of Jefferson School were invited to visit Lincoln School. They were shown the classrooms and were introduced to the teachers and staff. I could see the relief on our children's faces when they returned home from school that day. The children's first day at their new elementary school and subsequent weeks were days of adjustment. The caring faces at Lincoln School replaced the familiar faces of Jefferson. The foresight of Mrs. Buss and Mr. Felhofer is appreciated. I want to thank them for their thoughtfulness. The children have made a smooth transition.

PATTY STAUBER 900 S. Vine Ave.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 14 Dec 2002, Sat • Page 11)*



### **School pirouettes into dance studio**

Instructors glad new space already was constructed for children

By Jonathan Gneiser

Marshfield News-Herald

Students are again flocking to Jefferson Elementary, but most of them arrive after school lets out for the day.

At the start of the new school year, Main Street Conservatory of Dance relocated in the old school building at 1008 S. Cedar Ave.

The dance school's owners, Heather and Brian Conrad, joked about requesting the city change the street's name to match their business, or rename it "Just off Main Street Conservatory of Dance" as the property is about a block away from South Central Avenue.

It didn't take too much work to convert the old school for their business, Brian said.

"I think it's probably about perfect unless a person was going to build new," he said.

The former gym and two classrooms have been turned into dance studios with the installation of a raised floor supported by springs and the addition of mirrors to the walls.

"It was already set up for kids, and the room sizes were great" Heather said.

The sprung floor in a third classroom will soon be completed to provide a total of four studios, Heather said. The original classroom numbers and the color they're painted can be used to reference the studios.

The pink classroom is primarily utilized by the youngest dancers, the former gym is used for

ballet classes and the former kindergarten classroom is used for grade school-level classes, and jazz and mod-era dance classes, Heather said.

While remodeling the school, Brian said they decided to use many of the items that came with the building.

Lockers from the main hallway now divide a classroom to create a pair of dressing rooms, and coat cubbies designed for kindergartners were moved out into the main hall, Heather said.

A classroom near the main entrance has been converted into a lobby, office and a little dance store.

Next to the locker rooms and bathrooms, a room provides hang-out space for all students, Heather said.

The school's music room is now designated as a teen study, complete with a microwave, she said.

"Many come right from school and they're here all night," she said. As they worked to convert the school to suit their needs, the Conrads said they found many school 'artifacts,'" including an old pair of little girl's glasses, pennies, army men, marbles and jacks. They plan to create a display of the items.

The three-story school building is a big change from their old location at 231 S. Central Ave., which had two rooms, Heather said. Now there are three rooms running full-time. The fourth studio will be available for student rehearsals or additional classes.

The extra space has allowed the Conrads to offer 10 more classes per week and expand their ballet program. Heather said. They currently have 480 students, which is a record amount



Casey Riffe/ Marshfield News-Herald

*Dancers in a ballet class work on the barre during class at the Main Street Conservatory of Dance Thursday. The studio has a new location; in the former Jefferson Elementary School on South Cedar Avenue.*

their previous location wouldn't accommodate.

Many classes still have waiting lists, but that's due to a shortage of dance instructors — not a shortage of studio space, Heather said.

Dancing classes for first- and second-graders are especially popular. Heather said.

"No matter how many classes we offer, we're always full," she said.

If demand warrants additional dance studios beyond the four on the first floor, Brian said space on the second and third floor could be used.

The school's backyard, where Heather's modern dance classes have enjoyed learning in the grass, has also been a welcome addition, she said.

"Our old space was upstairs with no windows," she said. "Natural light and a yard is so much fun."

Tuck-pointing and landscaping are among the next projects for the building, while replacing the old school windows with more energy-efficient ones could eventually be in the works, said Brian, who added that the Marshfield School District has continued to provide advice and answer questions about the building.

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 20 Sep 2004, Pages 1 & 2)*



Casey Riffe/ Marshfield News-Herald

Dancers Veronica Nikolai, 7, from left, Cynthia Reis, 6, and Emily Nikolai, 7, watch the advanced ballet class through a window at the Main Street Conservatory of Dance on Thursday.





## A wet wait



Dan Young/ Marshfield  
News-Herald

*Parents and children wait in line Monday in the rain to get the kids registered for fall classes at the Main Street Conservatory of Dance at the former Jefferson School building in Marshfield.*

*(from the Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 26 Apr 2005, Page 1)*



*Main Street Conservatory of Dance held its 15th annual Spring Dance Recital, "Emotion in Motion," on May 18 and 19 in the Marshfield High School auditorium. About 600 dance students, ages 3 to 18, performed in six shows during the weekend to sold-out audiences. Conservatory owner/director Heather Conrad founded the business in 1998 after purchasing Tricia's Academy of Dance from her mentor and friend Tricia Marion. The dance studio is in Marshfield's former Jefferson Elementary School, 1008 S. Cedar Ave.*

## Conservatory performs



John H. Keel Photography

*(from the [Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin](#), 06 Jun 2013, Page A6)*