

Horace Mann

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SJG

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sible to add 40 or 50 students to Horace Mann, but that would compound the problem of under capacity in all middle schools."

One of the committee's arguments for keeping Horace Mann open was the school's low student-teacher ratio

"The student-teacher ratio at Horace Mann (18-20 students per teacher) is presently at an ideal level for the most effective application of teaching skills. If these students are transferred to other schools the increased class loads will very likely have an adverse effect on the level of individualized instruction available to students."

Troester said there are two bus routes now going to Horace Mann which together transport 105 students. When the school is closed, all the students would have to be bused and another bus route will be added.

Gary Wilkinson, a spokesman for the committee, criticized the board for its haste in making the decision to close the school.

"At a meeting two weeks ago, Mr. Burger, you said the decision should be made in a careful, plodding manner. The plod has developed into a gallop. It appears the decision is already cut and dried," he said.

"Certain studies should have been made and there was not enough consideration given to ways the school can be kept open."

At a special meeting Nov. 1, the board said it could not vote to close the school until it knew exactly how the students would be transferred. That information was not provided at Wednesday night's meeting.

Burger responded that pinning down the exact redistricting plan "is a little too much to expect at this stage of the game."

Troester said after the meeting that the administration did not want to alarm parents with redistricting plans until the board actually decided to close Horace Mann.

During the discussion on Hor

Mann, Charlotte Mann complained that the school should have been closed several years ago.

"I was told by Dr. Troester two years ago that Horace Mann offered the same quality education as the other schools, and now we're hearing just the opposite. The facts are twisted around according to your needs."

"It doesn't do us any good to come to these meetings. When Dr. Troester or the board decides to do something, they do what they want. This should have been done a long time ago."