Sabrina Garrett

Special to The Chronicle

Wilson County Director of Schools Mike Davis announced at 6 p.m. this evening that he will officially resign from the position when his contract expires on June 30, 2013. The Board of Education approved this resignation with a 5-0 vote.

Davis told The Wilson Post that he is going to “take some time to think” about his next professional move after he completes his sixth year as Director of Schools.

Although Davis gave no particular reason for his resignation, he said that he felt “blessed to be a part of a progressive, growing school system.”

Chairman of the Board of Education Don Weathers said that the search process for a new director will begin in January. “We will bring in candidates and interview them,” he said, adding that while they hope to locate the perfect candidate early in the process – they will wait “until June 30 to get the right one” if need be.

This story appeared first on www.wilsonpost.com, Dec. 3.

Work session explores Lebanon MS options

Schools in Wilson County increase by 400 students per year, said Board of Education Chairman Don Weathers at a work session this morning. The open session, which was held at the Harding Drive location of the former Lebanon High School auditorium, explored middle school possibilities to meet the needs of this growing student population.

Jason Morris, an architect with KBJM, presented three options to the board.

The first option was to use the newer portions of the former Lebanon High School facility built in the 1970s and 1990s - with some renovations since then. Morris, who provided the presentation free of charge, said that estimated cost based on current construction rates ranged from $2-8 million.

Concerned parents from Southside Elementary, Carroll Oakland Elementary and Tuckers Crossroads Elementary - the three schools that would be affected - asked the board about pests, asbestos removal and the condition of the building. Director of Schools Mike Davis told them that if the board chose to use the facility they would not utilize the old, decrepit sections “even for storage.”

“I can assure you we wouldn’t put your children anywhere that they would be exposed to that,” he said. Choosing to utilize the Harding Drive location would provide for a capacity of 850 students, but Davis said the actual number of students being educated there would be less. “There would be 637 students, taking sixth thru eighth graders from those schools (Southside, Tuckers and Carroll Oakland).”

The second option presented by Morris was to add-on to the existing schools, which would cost an estimated $9 million with science labs included “but not technology.” Based on current construction cost it would take $3.5 to add to Southside Elementary, $3.4 million to add to Carroll Oakland and almost $3 million to add a two story facility to TXR.

The final option was to explore building a new 165,000 square foot school on the property where the new Lebanon High School is located – which would cost roughly $23 million for the building and site work. “That does not include land surveys or reviews by the city of Lebanon,” Morris said.

Wilson County Commissioner William Glover attended the meeting and remarked that the county commission has experienced shortfalls due to the current economy. “The ink isn’t even dry on Watertown High School. I don’t know how we are going to come up with the money,” he said.

A guest in the crowd asked the board of education why they could not sell the facility on Harding Drive and use the money to build a new school or for additions to the current ones. “There is no buyer in the market,” Weathers said.

This story appeared first on www.wilsonpost.com, Dec. 1. Sabrina Garret is a staff writer for The Wilson Post.