

## **Big Walnut: Board Listens to Community, Enrollment Increases Continue**

*Submitted by: Andy Wecker, president, Big Walnut Board of Education*

In the months since the November 2016 election, we at Big Walnut Local Schools have been listening to residents of the district. We've also been considering how to reconcile what we've learned from our voters with the increasing numbers of kids in our classrooms as more families choose to make their homes in Big Walnut.

A great education for these children depends on a partnership by and among families, the Big Walnut Local Schools and the larger community in two villages and six townships. The need based on current and expected enrollment increases still exists, and we want to hear from residents what they will support to meet those needs.

We want to hear what you think.

Members of the community can fill out an online questionnaire through our website at [www.bwls.net](http://www.bwls.net). It takes just a few moments to fill out and will be extremely beneficial as we continue to look at our current situation. You can also email any questions to [facilitymatters@bwls.net](mailto:facilitymatters@bwls.net).

Another way to get informed and/or voice concerns or opinions is to come to a board meeting. Thirty minutes prior to the beginning of our April 20 and May 17 meetings, board members will be available to talk over coffee. Please join us at 6:00 p.m. at the District Administration Office located at 110 Tippett Court.

Projections have all our buildings, except the middle school, being over capacity within the next two years, which is sooner than new buildings could be constructed if we started today.

Along with Superintendent Angie Pollock and the rest of our board of education, I am sympathetic to concerns we are hearing from members of our community. We also want taxpayers to have more information the next time we appear on the ballot.

Enrollment increases have become an issue across our area, and we need to talk about what our plan will be moving forward.

I hope many in the community will take the time to speak up, whether by the website questionnaire or in person. We have a challenge in front of us, and we need the community's support to get it right.