

## Big Hollow OKs sale of Route 12 campus

### \$5 million minimum bid sought

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#### NEWS-SUN STAFF REPORT

INGLESIDE -- Facing massive debt projections and the possibility of further program cuts, the Big Hollow School Board on Monday night authorized the sale of the old Big Hollow School building.

The property at routes 12 and 134, is no longer required with the completion of the Fish Lake Road campus, which now houses all District 38 students.

Board member Jan Carsella said a minimum sale price of \$5 million has been set by the board. While the majority of the proceeds will go directly to the district, the money will be allocated.

"All options will be considered," Carsella said. "The board will be working closely with a financial adviser to figure out what will be best for the school district."

According to Illinois laws governing the sale of school property, the board has 60 days to publicize the sale and solicit bids, Carsella said. After that, the board can accept an offer or reject all offers and use a broker to facilitate a sale.

The proposed sale is the latest in a series of initiatives aimed at stemming a mounting deficit, projected to surpass \$31 million within the next five years. It comes on the heels of a July vote to cut a number of classes for the 2007-08 school year and reduce expenditures.

School enrollment has tripled over the past five years in the west county district, while revenues have remained stagnant as a result of tax-cap limits and underfunded state and federally mandated programs. Voters rejected two recent tax proposals.

"We've heard from a number of parents and concerned residents that we need to consider every option with regard to tackling this financial challenge. We understand that while further cuts may be inevitable, the sale will certainly provide some short-term relief for the district."

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