

NESHAMINY

IU could rent Tawanka center

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If the IU's in, evening activities could be out.

The Neshaminy School District is negotiating a deal with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit No. 22 to rent the Tawanka Learning Center in Lower Southampton for more than \$7 per square foot, officials said during a school board meeting Wednesday night.

While administrators said the IU would be an ideal tenant in an unstable economy, board members expressed concern that the IU would not pay to keep the building open at night for events.

Neshaminy, though, could keep the school available if they pick up the tab. But that could be costly to cover custodians, heat, other utilities and maintenance, said business administrator Joseph Paradise.

When the district closed other facilities, including Neshaminy Middle School in Middletown, evening use ended, Paradise added.

Board President Rick Eccles pointed out that if the IU is going to pay more than \$1 less per square foot than the property's market value, the institution should be willing to compensate in other ways, like working out an agreement for resident use.

Board member Ritchie Webb said he was concerned that it wouldn't be fair to pay for the Lower Southampton community to continue their nightly activities when Middletown residents were told theirs would cease.

The board asked Paradise to go back to the bargaining table with the IU and continue to negotiate, specifically regarding maintaining nighttime events for a better deal.

The Tawanka alternative program will be housed elsewhere in the district, but that location has yet to be determined, officials said.

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