

NESHAMINY

District to auction furniture from middle school

Officials said they're also negotiating a possible rental of a portion of the facility.

By **RACHEL CANELLI**
STAFF WRITER

For anyone who always wanted to take a piece of the closed Neshaminy Middle School with them, now's your chance.

The district will hold a live auction at 9 a.m. Nov. 8 in the Middletown school's gym, 1200 Langhorne-Yardley Road, to sell the building's remaining furniture, said business administrator Joseph Paradise.

The Neshaminy school board Tuesday night approved 8-0 to authorize the auction and advertisement for it. Board member William O'Connor was not present for the meeting.

After Neshaminy Middle closed in June, the rest of the district's schools got first dibs on the leftover furniture. But there's still a surplus of metal and wood shop equipment, hand tools, pianos, sports equipment, electronic equipment and other furnishings, said Paradise.

"Since it's taxpayer-purchased, we can't throw it out or give it away," he said.

Paradise estimated the district could earn between \$4,000 and \$5,000.

"This is a great opportunity for a parent to come in and buy their child's desk," said board President Richard Eccles.

In its 43-year history, the school earned the distinction of "Blue Ribbon" status from the U.S. Department of Education for the quality of its curriculum and achievement in 1999-2000. Since 1985, there have been 18 public and private schools in Bucks that have earned Blue Ribbon designation.

In its last school year, Neshaminy Middle was honored with the prestigious Bronze Level National Recognition Award from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation for the school's student health initiatives.

Despite a public uproar from parents, the school board closed the school in June because of declining enrollment in the district, budgetary concerns and an opportunity to lease the building due to its location.

St. Mary Medical Center recently inquired about the building's availability. Neshaminy officials confirm they're negotiating an agreement with the hospital to rent a section of the facility.

St. Mary needs the 8,000-square-foot space in the library, faculty and classroom area in the center of the building as soon as possible for education and training through the end of June 2009, administrators said.

Paradise would not reveal the rental rate but said the board will be pleased. The board is expected to vote on the lease later this month.

Though the school is closed, Neshaminy Middle School will be open as a polling site on Election Day, Nov. 4, administrators said.

Rachel Canelli can be reached at 215-949-4191 or .