

A \$5 MILLION PROPERTY PURCHASE WITHOUT PUBLIC INPUT

Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 05.30.24

The Brunswick Beacon reported on May 16 that the Brunswick County Schools just spent more than 5 million dollars to purchase the Summerhill furniture warehouse and mattress properties to be used mainly for storage and secure record keeping.

“This has been in the works in closed session for a long time,” said school board member Steve Gainey. And schools superintendent Cole said, “It’s more space than we need right now.”

Why was this done in closed session? The community should be outraged. Even though a print shop and some operations personnel will be housed there, why would the district need 45,135 square feet mostly to store student and personnel records? Aren’t we in an age in which records are stored digitally?

I would love to ask teachers and principals if they would have different priorities for using the capital projects bond money, rather than the purchase of two buildings that the District admittedly does not fully need. What would community members have said about the purchase if it had not been done in “closed session?”

We need to elect new people to our school board who will allow transparency and public input into school district spending. In November, I’m voting for Janice Simmons, an educator who actually has 33 years of experience working in public schools, someone who will speak out against “closed session” spending and who will speak up for our students and teachers.

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