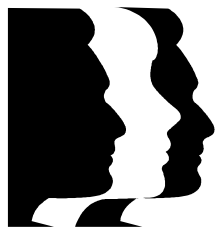


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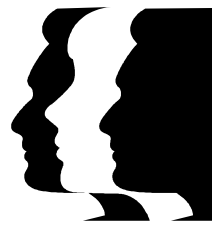


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School Board Gives Priority To Out-Of-System Students

By Tonya Sprague

Once again, the Bradley County Board of Education has delayed improvements and renovations at Valley View Elementary School. The board withdrew their original request presented to the Bradley County Commission for money to build two new

elementary schools and to include renovations at Valley View. They voted not to include six additional classrooms and a library, but to use all available funds to build one new elementary school on Minnis Road, in the northeast part of the county. This is not the first time improvements to Valley View, which

is in southern Bradley County, have been passed over in favor of other projects.

The estimated cost of construction and design for renovations and additions at Valley View Elementary is approximately \$3 million. According to Mayor D. Gary Davis, the county can borrow \$18 million without a tax increase. If the

money is used entirely for schools, the city school system would get one-third. The county school system would then have \$12 million for a new school. If all the \$12 million is used to build a new school for the county it would be about three years before the county could borrow the money needed for Valley View.

Bradley County School Board member Christy Critchfield's district includes Valley View Elementary. She would like for the School Board to move forward with their original plans for Valley View's renovations. She said in an emotional appeal to fellow board members, "I made a promise to those children and their parents that I would fight for them. Before we build another inadequate elementary school, as Mr. Taylor has said, we ought to take care of the ones we have."

County Commissioner and former Bradley County School Board member Dr. Mel Griffith, also voiced his concerns toward delaying Valley View Elementary's renovations. He said, "To not pursue the addition at Valley View School at this time, I believe that's a serious mistake. After years of getting rid of portables, Valley View is still using the same portables that my children went to school in during the 1970's and they recently added another one. It's the only school in the whole system that does not have an adequate library. And I'd like to point out that

almost all of the students in that school are residents of the Bradley County School District, people that we are required to educate. While the schools on the north side of the county have some 200 out

accommodate people from outside the district."

Valley View Elementary has one of the oldest portables in the school system. It was obtained from the old Bradley Central High School

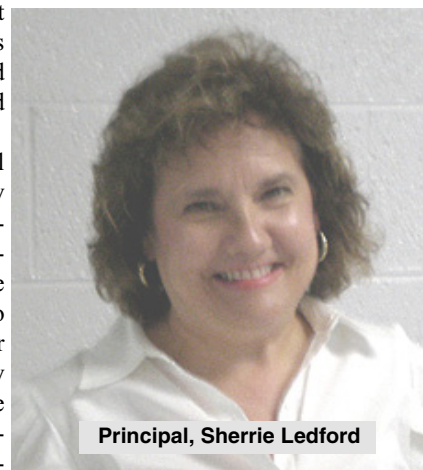
in the early 1970's and was meant to be used temporarily. According to Valley View principal Sherrie Ledford, the portable is over 40 years old and has been at her school for 33 years.

Valley View Elementary School opened in 1952 with six classrooms at a cost of \$70,000. In 1958, four additional classrooms were added for \$31,500.

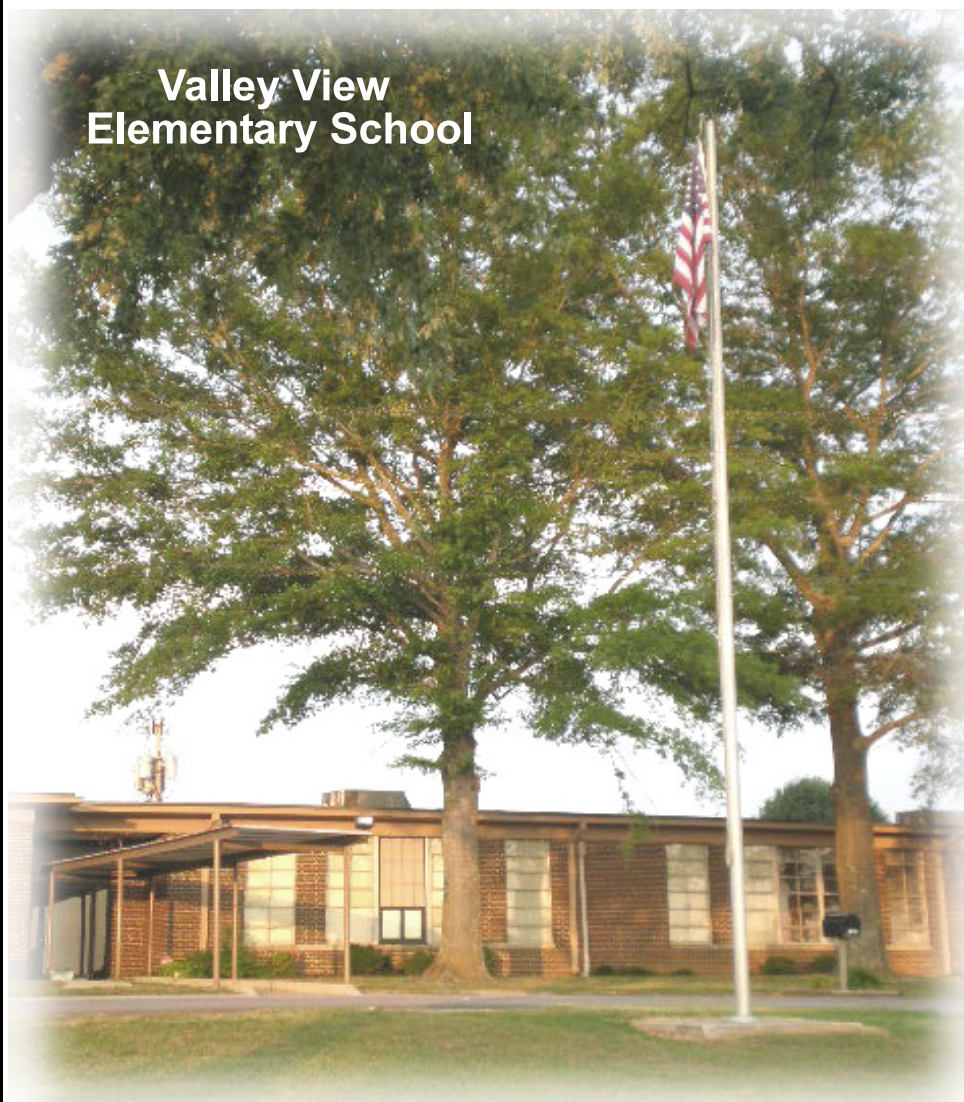
A new gymnasium was added in 1973 at \$25,000. In 1989 four classrooms were added for \$250,000, and four more again in 1998 for \$390,000. The kitchen and cafeteria were renovated in 2006 for \$250,869. The last addition to Valley View was another used portable relocated in 2007 from Ocoee Middle School for \$60,000 and is now being utilized as a computer lab.

David Robinson, former principal of Valley View Elementary from 1967 to 2000 said, "It's unfortunate that they are delaying their decision, because Valley View is due an upgrade in the library facility."

Despite setbacks and delays, the Bradley County Board of Education may still be willing to consider funding options for additions and improvements at Valley View.



Principal, Sherrie Ledford



Valley View Elementary School

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