

# TIMES OBSERVER

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## Career Center upgrades may include a dedicated IEP room



The Warren County Career Center will be renovated in the near future.



Part of that renovation may include a new room in the building specifically for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

The potential new room was discussed during this week's Warren County School District Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology Committee meeting.

Dr. Patricia Hawley, WCSD Director of Pupil Services, spoke to the school board about the importance of such a room.

*"As a district, we are responsible for the transition phase of students with disabilities," she said. "I believe as a district we have immersed ourselves in intervening with mental health issues. It is quite significant, our interventions are working. I feel strongly that this would be another step in the right direction."*

The new room, if approved, would allow students with IEPs to gain specialized training in occupations that will be attainable for them after leaving the school district.

Hawley and WCCC Principal Jim Evers visited a school in Erie that utilizes a similar program for IEP students. The visit was *"enlightening,"* according to Evers.

*"I went there on kind of a selfish level — I was seeing very few options in our building for life skills and autistic students," he said. "It turned out to be a huge benefit. We were absolutely blown away by what they offered in Erie. They had several programs for life skills students. We can change*

*things around to meet our needs. I think this would be a fantastic program.”*

Superintendent Amy Stewart supported the idea.

*“This program is a win, and a win, and a win,” she said. “I don’t want to build a new building and not have room for this. When we heard about this we brought Norbert (Kennerknecht, Director of Buildings and Grounds Services) into the loop. I want this located at a centrally located building, and the Career Center fits that.”*

Although schematic design of the WCCC renovations have already begun, Kennerknecht said the new room/area would *“certainly be doable”*.

Stewart told Hawley and Evers that the board is prepared to discuss the program further at the next meeting on March 12.

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