

### **I heard that 7 Hills Church wants to use space at Anderson High School. Why?**

7 Hills Church, based in Kentucky, recently approached Forest Hills School District with a proposed partnership agreement. If approved, 7 Hills will use Anderson High School's Titus Auditorium, the main gym and auxiliary gym on Sundays from 4:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. for weekly church services. The agreement also states that the church will require parking lot and WiFi access.

This is a multi-year contract. 7 Hills Church will use this space as a satellite location prior to potentially building a permanent facility in the area.

### **What would AHS receive in return?**

In return for use of the space, 7 Hills Church will purchase approximately \$400,000 in enhancements for Titus Auditorium. These enhancements will be donated to the school and remain at Titus Auditorium when the contract ends. The improvements will include a new and upgraded permanent sound system, lighting system, sound treatment and a new 4K projector.

### **How will this impact students and staff?**

The Anderson High School administration worked alongside the athletic director and Titus Auditorium coordinator to review these logistics. As there are typically very few school-related activities on Sundays, the district does not anticipate the agreement will have a significant impact on student events.

### **Does AHS need this equipment? Have school administrators consulted with performing arts staff members?**

Titus Auditorium received new carpeting and chairs during the summer of 2015, but some of the auditorium's technical equipment is 30 years old. Keeping in mind that the district has limited financial resources, the district does not have earmarked resources for upgrades such as these and cannot afford to pay for them in the near future.

Building and district administrators consulted with Anderson's music and theatre staff regarding this proposal. Staff members confirmed that the equipment proposed is among the newest technology available and is of high-quality.

### **Will the district have to pay for anything related to the services?**

No. The proposal states that the church will reimburse the district for custodial coverage during Sunday services. 7 Hills will pay for security officers to monitor traffic on Forest Road and in the parking lots on Sunday mornings. Additionally, the church will pay for snow/ice removal services during inclement weather on Sundays and they will carry liability insurance to cover any damages or liability.

**How will the district prevent or mitigate increased wear and tear on the facilities caused by hosting weekly church services?**

The district will require 7 Hills Church to pay a rental fee for use of the space. The money generated from the fee will be used to ensure that Titus Auditorium remains in the best condition possible throughout the length of the contract agreement.

**If AHS receives \$400,000 in donations, the district can put the money it saved towards other facility issues, right?**

No. The district does not have adequate resources in its budget to pay for upgrades at Titus Auditorium, and therefore, there will not be savings that can be reallocated towards other projects.

**Is this type of agreement allowed? What about separation of church and state?**

The current proposal meets the requirements of the Board of Education's existing policies. There are many other schools across the region with similar agreements; this situation will not be unique to Forest Hills. Additionally, this will not be the first time a church has used FHSD property.

**What are the next steps?**

Forest Hills School District administration is working with 7 Hills Church to ensure that the proposal meets the needs and expectations of the district, Board of Education and the community. The Board of Education could make a decision on the proposal during its regularly scheduled March meeting.