

# Survey

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survey former students about their success five years after high school, when about 40 percent of the surveys were returned, stamped "address unknown." Now the district would be seeking responses from Southside High School graduates from as far back as 20 years ago.

"I don't know that I can recommend spending taxpayer dollars to send out cards that are just going to come back to us 'return to sender,'" said Thomas Kump, a school board member and director of environmental health for the county Health Department.

"We're not afraid of what we'd find out if we did it," he said. "We're afraid of what we wouldn't find out, after we spent all that money."

Kump added that the county Health Department has received telephone calls from concerned graduates in states as far away as Florida and Texas. "These people obviously aren't living at their old Elmira addresses," he said. "But word is getting out."

The county Health Department is using these calls to compile a list of cancer cases among students. Kump said state Health Department investigators told him most of the cases have been verified in the state's cancer registry. Every doctor who diagnoses cancer must report it to the registry.

School board members will continue to discuss the possibility of notifying graduates through Web pages maintained by the high school and alumni.

Meanwhile, air tests will be conducted during school hours next week at Southside and Elmira Free

Academy. EFA's results will be used for comparison.

■ In other action, the school board reconsidered its policy regarding school attendance boundaries but decided not to change it significantly. Currently, children who live within the attendance area for a particular school cannot attend a different school.

The board considered allowing exceptions for parents who would suffer a severe economic disadvantage as a result — for example, losing a job for lack of after-school child care.

But the board decided to stick to the current policy of no exceptions, except in cases where the child cannot receive the academic training they need at their closest school or would be in danger if they attended the closest school.

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Sun, Mar 31, 2019