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## Malta school to be named after Paul T. Wright

By John Kelleher - Managing Editor

DeKALB - The old Malta High School will be renamed for Paul T. Wright of Malta.

In the 1960s, Wright and his family donated 38 acres to the old Malta School District to build the school.

The name was chosen by the DeKalb School Board Monday night.

More than 60 elementary school students took part in an essay contest to name the school.

Henry Deng, a fourth-grader at Lincoln Elementary School, wrote an essay in support of naming the school for Wright.

Henry and members of the Wright family will be honored at the school board's Feb. 17 meeting.

"(Mr. Wright) wanted children to have a good education," Henry wrote. "Having the school named after Mr. Wright, it will help us remember the wonderful thing he and his family did for our community.

"Also, 'Wright' has a double meaning. When you say 'Wright Elementary School,' it sounds like you're saying the RIGHT elementary school. People will say, 'It's the right elementary school for your kids!'"

Other nominations from students ranged from Spralta (a combination of Springfield and Malta) to Franklin Academy (for Benjamin Franklin) to Ellis I. Elementary School (for New York's Ellis Island).

The school was closed after the 2000 merger of the DeKalb and Malta school districts. It was leased to Cornerstone Christian Academy for two years.

It will reopen in the fall as an elementary school run jointly by the school district and Northern Illinois University.

"We were very impressed with the amount of thought and creativity that went into all of these essays," said school board President Tom Teresinski. "It was a very hard choice, but I think for all the reasons stated in Henry's essay, this is the right choice for this very exciting, very unique school."

School board member Andy Small said he had asked Malta officials to conduct a straw poll of village board members. They favored naming the school after Wright.

The school will consist mostly of students from other parts of the district, said Scott Kubelka, the principal of Tyler Elementary School. He will become Wright Elementary School's principal in the

fall.

Seven days ago, the district asked parents if they would be interested in having their children attend the school. More than 100 applications have been filed already, Kubelka said.

He said the vast majority of the students will be bused to the school, which will offer full-day kindergarten and a variety of unique educational opportunities.

The school will open at 6 a.m. and close at 6 p.m., he said. Parents will have to provide transportation to the preschool and post-school day programs.

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