



Education Services Center. 5776 S. Crocker Street. Littleton, Colorado 80120. 303.347.3300.

October 30, 2008

**Board of Education Workshop: facilities issue
October 27, 2008
6:30 p.m.; Arapahoe High School cafeteria
Summary**

The LPS Board of Education continued its discussion on the facilities issue after having received the final report and recommendations from the Facilities Use Task Force on October 23.

The Board examined enrollment projections, history, and forecasts regarding the district as a whole and individually for the four schools recommended for evaluation by the Task Force, which are Ames Elementary, Whitman Elementary, Highland Elementary, and Hopkins Elementary. LPS staff provided the Board with data specific to special program needs, staffing policies and procedures, and early childhood education. It was noted that the impact of facility changes on staffing won't be known until the Board concludes its budget process for school year 2009-2010. This is anticipated to occur in December or January.

Based on enrollment data and trends, the conclusion is that the reconfiguration and consolidation of any school would likely mean that school populations would need to be reassigned to more than one other school. The Board expressed a need to keep neighborhoods together as much as possible.

The Board discussed the Task Force's recommendations and indicated the following:

- The sister school idea between Ames and Lenski elementary schools is intriguing but would be best realized through a grass-roots effort. The Board is not interested in pursuing this idea at this time.
- Ideas around consolidation and/or repurposing of middle schools might be helpful in the future but are not necessarily feasible currently. The Board is not interested in pursuing this idea at this time.
- A K-8 model is also an interesting concept. The Board noted that more time would need to be taken to determine if there is a demand for such a model, how it would bring uniqueness to LPS, how it would fit with existing middle schools, and the impact on other district schools.
- The development of an early childhood center is an attractive concept. More time is needed to develop a plan and therefore implementation may not likely be possible in August, 2009. The Board asked administration to study this issue for the possibility of implementation in the future.
- A partnership with Arapahoe Community College (ACC) for the expansion of adult education offerings in the community is another attractive concept. The Board asked administration to pursue this idea further with ACC and to report back to the Board.

The Board stressed that its first priority is to examine possibilities that create optimal program options in LPS that maintain equity, create opportunity, and ensure school enrollments that support capacity needs. The Board stated that its secondary goal is to repurpose schools in a meaningful way that adds value and creates opportunity in LPS. The Board also stated that it is not looking to permanently close/shutter schools. Therefore, regardless of the timetable for any facility repurposing, all LPS facilities will continue to be maintained and used, which will stabilize neighborhoods.

For its November 6 meeting, the Board asked administration to provide specific information regarding the impacts in the following areas of moving students from each of the four elementary schools to other schools:

- transportation
- programs
- special education needs
- specific movement of students from one school to others
- moving the Pathways program out of the Village Preschool facility

The Board also asked administration to provide realistic expectations for changes in Fall 2009, in the context of other district initiatives and the impact on schools, such as Professional Learning Communities and the universal literacy framework.

The Board concluded its workshop by stating that given the district's declining enrollment trends and budget challenges for next year, doing nothing regarding facilities is not an option; schools will be impacted by budget cuts and the smallest elementary schools will not be able to maintain the current level of programming for students. The Board stressed that any decision that is ultimately made must be what is best for students.

The Board thanked members of the Facilities Use Task Force, the LPS community, and all LPS employees for their attention to this matter and their commitment to maintaining excellence in LPS.

The Board's timeline is as follows:

* November 6, 2008

Special Board of Education Meeting

Discussion Item: Facility Use Task Force Recommendations

6:30 p.m., ESC

* November 13, 2008

Board of Education Meeting

Board to take action on facility use issue

6:30 p.m., ESC

* Public comment will be heard at both of these meetings.