

Central and East Lawrence Elementary School Consolidation Working Group

AGENDA

7-9 p.m., September 7, 2011

Lawrence Public Schools' District Office, 110 McDonald Drive

1. Overview of Charge and Timeline – Superintendent Rick Doll
2. Overview of the Role of the Facilitators – Kathleen Ames-Oliver and Marilu Goodyear
3. Brainstorming and Decision on Ground Rules for Interaction – Kathleen
4. Setting-the-Stage Exercise in Small Groups – Kathleen and Marilu
5. Review of Agenda for the Next Meeting – Kathleen
6. Meeting Evaluation – Marilu

Meeting Schedule

September 19

October 3 and 17

November 7 and 21

December 5 and 19

January 2, 16 and 30

All meetings 7-9 p.m. at 110 McDonald Drive

Vision Statement for Elementary School Facilities

Our vision for our elementary school facilities for the next five years is:

1. All 11 or 12 elementary schools remaining after consolidation shall be renovated and expanded to eliminate deficiencies and needs including the elimination of portables.
2. We shall strive to have elementary schools of between 300 and 500 in enrollment to ensure efficiencies and to reflect our community's interest in avoiding schools that are either too large or too small.
3. We shall strive to create and maintain schools that embody a sense of community so that every school is a community school and allowing for as many children as possible to walk or bike to school if they choose to do so.
4. All schools shall have the space to support the district's educational programming including all day kindergarten.
5. There shall be equity in learning environment among all facilities throughout our community.
6. Any new or renovated space shall consider flexibility to accommodate future changes to educational programming.
7. All remaining elementary schools shall be fully utilized before constructing new schools other than those that would replace an existing school.

To make this vision possible, we shall reduce the current 15 elementary schools to 11 or 12 schools by closing Wakarusa Valley at the end of the 2010-2011 school year and then consolidate the six schools of Sunset Hill, Hillcrest, Pinckney, Cordley, Kennedy and New York into four or three schools within three years. This will enable our district to reach the target enrollment goals, to maximize operational funds to increase equity in learning, to focus educational funds on teaching and learning and to make more affordable the necessary renovations of remaining facilities.

Central and East Lawrence Elementary School Consolidation Working Group

The Lawrence Board of Education hereby creates a Central and East Elementary School Consolidation Working Group (Working Group) to recommend a community plan for reducing the six elementary schools of Sunset Hill, Hillcrest, Pinckney, Cordley, Kennedy and New York to four or three schools within the next two or three years.

The Working Group's recommendation must include reducing the six schools to three or four schools. The Board is spending contingency funds to create a bridge to consolidation within two or three years. The Board has determined that a bond shall be put forward to the community to finance the Working Group's eventual recommendations as well as to meet needs in our other schools. However, should the bond vote fail, there shall still be consolidation. In the event that the bond vote fails, the board pledges strong and continuing efforts to successfully pass a bond at the earliest opportunity in order to fully implement our stated vision for our community's elementary school facilities as well as the Working Group's plan as adopted by the Board.

In its deliberations and in forming its recommendation, the Working Group shall:

1. Include 27 members limited to stakeholders of the schools. Four members shall be representative of each of the six schools listed and two representatives from Woodlawn. One member shall be appointed as an at-large member and shall serve as chair. The members shall be appointed by the superintendent in accordance with Board Policy BBC. Site councils from each of the six schools shall nominate seven potential Working Group members. The superintendent shall appoint three members from these nominations and one at-large member who lives in the attendance area. Woodlawn shall nominate three representatives to the superintendent who will appoint one from the list and one at-large member. The superintendent and one educator from each school shall serve as ex-officio, nonvoting members. All meetings of the Working Group shall be open and public meetings.
2. Read and utilize the report of the Elementary School Facilities Task Force.
3. Begin immediately to engage in the process of consolidating their unique educational and social communities to determine which schools are most appropriate for consolidation based upon the criteria set out in the Board's Vision Statement for Elementary School Facilities and the Task Force's report.
4. From the appointed membership, form two committees. The initial focus of one shall be on the central schools of Hillcrest and Sunset Hill. The initial focus of the second shall be on the east schools of Cordley, Kennedy and New York. Membership of each committee shall consist of the representatives of the schools being discussed with Pinckney's and Woodlawn's representatives split between the two. The Working Group may adjust the focus and membership of the committees as discussions progress. The Working Group shall continue meeting as one group with some discussions taking place as a whole and some in committees.
5. Consider the physical condition, current value and potential cost of repair or replacement of one or more buildings.
6. Invite representatives from peripheral schools to the discussion if it becomes apparent that proposed changes will significantly impact enrollment and boundaries of a school.
7. Seek to reach agreement through consensus.

The superintendent shall call the Working Group to its first meeting as soon as possible following appointment of the membership. The Working Group shall complete its work by February, 2012. Reasonable amounts, approved in advance by the board, may be spent by the Working Group in conducting its work.