

Task Force Charge

The Board of Education of Lawrence Public Schools has created this elementary facility Task Force to recommend a community vision and plan for the school district's elementary facilities that reflect the varied community and educational values and how to best reflect those values given the restraints of current and anticipated district resources.

The following discussion has taken the work of the four subcommittees and compiled it into what is, hopefully, a useful working document from which to begin the process of reaching a consensus of the Task Force towards a community vision that is reflective of these varied values. The discussion is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Goals

Section 2: The Scenarios

Section 3: Additional Information for Evaluating How These Scenarios Meet Our Goals

The initial intent was to simply provide the Task Force with the separate work product from each of the four subcommittees' discussions at the January 17, 2011 meeting. In the process of reviewing and comparing that work product, it became apparent that there were certain shared aspects of the ideas from the subcommittees. Thus, the scenarios presented in Section 2 below reflect a process of compiling the subcommittees' work and removing duplication among the scenarios, so that the entire Task Force can assess more clearly the distinct ideas that have emerged from our process.

Section 1: Goals

As a starting point to reviewing the scenarios that have been generated by the subcommittees, it is important for the Task Force to keep in mind the baseline assumptions we are using and the long-term goals we have set out to achieve:

Baseline Assumptions

Funding: Given the unlikelihood that the State will fund federal stimulus dollars that are sun setting, plan for budget cuts of \$3 million in 2011-2012.

Long Range Plan: Develop plan of what the District should look like in 5 years with interim short-term steps to achieve this. Such plan should include a model elementary school for use in determining appropriate learning environments for any new improvements to schools.

The elementary school population (not including virtual school) has declined 3% since 2001; however there has been modest growth of 4.3% since 2006. Based on that, a long range capital plan should include an anticipated growth rate of 0.8% per year.

Educational Programming: Evidence does support that all day kindergarten has a positive impact on student achievement, however due to funding issues, it is unlikely that all day kindergarten will be incorporated in the 7 elementary schools that still operate ½ day. For planning purposes, assume all day kindergarten will be added at 2 additional schools in the next 5 years (but we would plan to have all day kindergarten in all schools in the future).

ESL is a successful and growing program within the Lawrence school district. There are currently 2 cluster sites and 2 neighborhood sites within the district. Assume in the next 5 years that there will be at least a 3rd neighborhood site.

Criteria for Evaluating Scenarios

The following list, which the Task Force has identified previously as a compilation of its long-term goals for the District, is included here as the criteria against which to evaluate the suggested scenarios.

1. District should fully utilize elementary school locations before constructing new schools at new locations
2. Plan for minimum enrollment of 300 students at all schools
3. Plan for equity in terms of learning environments across the district
4. Plan for all-day kindergarten at all schools in the future
5. Plan for elimination of all portables at elementary schools in the future
6. Plan for flexibility of facilities, operations and maintenance, and school operations to accommodate changes to educational programs in the future
7. Plan for investment in specific facilities to address aging facilities and operations and maintenance issues
8. Deploy services in a differentiated manner such that all schools receive the services and programs they need
9. District should strive to create and maintain schools that embody such a community that every school is a community school.
10. District should ensure that as many children as possible are able to walk or bike to school if they choose to do so.
11. Maintain a constant focus on incorporating research-based best practices. The Task Force's review of class and school size research has shown that, while these factors should be considered, other best practices have a greater impact on student achievement--high quality classroom teachers (which includes strong professional development, recruitment, and retention efforts); strong teacher-student relationships; instructional approaches including employing multi-tiered teaching and instructional interventions; full-day kindergarten; early childhood programs; and substantial parental involvement.
12. Long-term plan to provide minimum 720 sf classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 sf classrooms for Kindergarten in existing schools.

Section 2: The Scenarios

From the subcommittees' work, two categories of scenarios emerged. The first category retains all of the District's existing elementary schools. The second category looks at various combinations of future consolidations and/or immediate school closures.

The subcommittees' work resulted in multiple consolidation/closure scenarios; however, when compared against each other, four consolidation/closure scenarios emerged, with certain options or variations presented for each of the scenarios. The four scenarios are summarized on the following pages.

As a tool to assist each Task Force member in our consensus-building process, the charts for each of the scenarios include a column titled "How Does the Scenario Respond to Task Force Goals?" This column includes a prompt for each of the Task Force's twelve working goals, as well as a prompt for other goals or values. (An example of how other goals or values can be applied to our work is attached as Exhibit A). As we prepare for our discussion of these scenarios, it will be helpful to think through how each of the scenarios does nor does not meet these goals and values; space is provided in each of the charts for notes or questions about the scenarios with respect to these goals.

Retain All Fifteen Elementary Schools						
Scenario	Total Schools in 2016-2017	Consolidation into "new" school in 3-5 years	Closures in 2011-2012	Possible Variations Within the Scenario	How Does the Scenario Respond to Task Force Goals?	
A. Retain all current elementary school facilities	15	None	None		1. Utilization:	
					2. 300 Enrollment at all schools:	
					3. Equity in learning environments:	
					4. Plan for all-day kindergarten:	
					5. Eliminate Portables:	
					6. Plan for program flexibility:	
					7. Capital investment to address aging facilities:	
					8. Needs-based use of resources:	
					9. Community schools:	
					10. Walkability:	
					11. Supports research-based best practices:	
					12. Long-term plan to provide minimum 720 sf classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 sf classrooms for Kindergarten in all schools:	
					13. Other Goals/Values	

Scenarios That Consolidate and/or Close Elementary Schools

Scenario	Total Schools in 2016-2017	Consolidation into "new" school in 3-5 years	Closures in 2011-2012	Possible Variations Within the Scenario	How Does the Scenario Respond to Task Force Goals?	
<p>B: Close 2 schools now, consolidate 4 schools into two schools later</p>	<p>11</p>	<p><u>East Lawrence</u> - New York and Kennedy (if New York is not closed in 2011-12)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Cordley and Kennedy (if Cordley is not closed in 2011-12)</p> <p><u>Central Lawrence</u> - Sunset Hill and Hillcrest</p>	<p>Wakarusa Valley and Cordley</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Wakarusa Valley & Pinckney</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Wakarusa Valley and New York</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Sunset Hill & Broken Arrow</p>	<p>The proposed consolidation could occur into an existing building with renovation and expansion, or it could occur into a new building on an existing site or at a new location</p> <p>Special programs (e.g., dual language or international curriculum) could be located at either Sunset Hill or New York</p>	<p>1. Utilization:</p>	
					<p>2. 300 Enrollment at all schools:</p>	
					<p>3. Equity in learning environments:</p>	
					<p>4. Plan for all-day kindergarten:</p>	
					<p>5. Eliminate Portables:</p>	
					<p>6. Plan for program flexibility:</p>	
					<p>7. Capital investment to address aging facilities:</p>	
					<p>8. Needs-based use of resources:</p>	
					<p>9. Community schools:</p>	
					<p>10. Walkability:</p>	
					<p>11. Supports research-based best practices:</p>	
					<p>12. Long-term plan to provide minimum 720 sf classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 sf classrooms for Kindergarten in all schools:</p>	
					<p>13. Other Goals/Values</p>	

Scenario	Total Schools in 2016-2017	Consolidation into "new" school in 3-5 years	Closures in 2011-2012	Possible Variations Within the Scenario	How Does the Scenario Respond to Task Force Goals?	
<p>D: Close 1 school now, consolidate 2 schools into 1 school later</p>	<p>13</p>	<p><u>Central Lawrence</u> - Sunset Hill and Hillcrest</p>	<p>Wakarusa Valley OR Broken Arrow</p>	<p>Kennedy, New York, Cordley, and Pinckney would be expanded. The proposed consolidation could occur into an existing building with renovation and expansion, or it could occur into a new building on an existing site or at a new location Special program (e.g., ESL cluster or an enhanced language immersion program) could be located at New York.</p>	<p>1. Utilization:</p>	
					<p>2. 300 Enrollment at all schools:</p>	
					<p>3. Equity in learning environments:</p>	
					<p>4. Plan for all-day kindergarten:</p>	
					<p>5. Eliminate Portables:</p>	
					<p>6. Plan for program flexibility:</p>	
					<p>7. Capital investment to address aging facilities:</p>	
					<p>8. Needs-based use of resources:</p>	
					<p>9. Community schools:</p>	
					<p>10. Walkability:</p>	
					<p>11. Supports research-based best practices:</p>	
					<p>12. Long-term plan to provide minimum 720 sf classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 sf classrooms for Kindergarten in all schools:</p>	
					<p>13. Other Goals/Values</p>	

Scenario	Total Schools in 2016-2017	Consolidation into "new" school in 3-5 years	Closures in 2011-2012	Possible Variations Within the Scenario	How Does the Scenario Respond to Task Force Goals?	
E. Close two schools now, no consolidations	13	None	Wakarusa Valley & New York		1. Utilization:	
					2. 300 Enrollment at all schools:	
					3. Equity in learning environments:	
					4. Plan for all-day kindergarten:	
					5. Eliminate Portables:	
					6. Plan for program flexibility:	
					7. Capital investment to address aging facilities:	
					8. Needs-based use of resources:	
					9. Community schools:	
					10. Walkability:	
					11. Supports research-based best practices:	
					12. Long-term plan to provide minimum 720 sf classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 sf classrooms for Kindergarten in all schools:	
					13. Other Goals/Values	

Along with each of these scenarios, the subcommittees assumed that all facilities remaining in operation in 2016-17 will undergo needed renovations or expansions to address the issues of physical condition, equity, and minimum enrollment identified by the Task Force.

Section 3: Additional Information for Evaluating How These Scenarios Address Our Goals

The following highlights information the Task Force has gathered as it relates to various Task Force goals. This information is meant to assist Task Force members in evaluating the options and variations presented as part of the scenarios under consideration.

In reaching consensus regarding the variations presented in the scenarios, it will be a critical part of the Task Force's process to assess the physical conditions at the schools the Task Forces proposes to retain as part of its proposed long-term facilities plan. Below is compilation of information from the report of the Facilities subcommittee to assist the Task Force in this assessment:

Kennedy: The physical condition of Kennedy raises a number of questions regarding its viability as a facility that should remain within the District's inventory over a 5 to 10 year period. More detailed indoor air quality tests are being conducted to address short-term concerns about the building.

Broken Arrow: Although recent investments in mechanical systems and the addition of shared use space and administrative offices have been completed, in the long term Broken Arrow is a facility which has challenges regarding classroom environments, owing to the open classroom layout. Notably, Broken Arrow has been recognized for outstanding student achievement

Pinckney: Pinckney has one of the highest proportions of classrooms that are smaller than 720 sf and is the smallest site in the district. The combination of these physical parameters creates special challenges to increasing enrollment and expanding classroom square footage.

Wakarusa Valley: With the smallest enrollment in the district, a proposed closure of Wakarusa Valley impacts the fewest total number of students—thus yielding the largest per pupil savings. The tradeoff for those students may be added transportation time. Whether any increase in transportation costs would occur depends upon which schools students would be assigned to attend. Substantial new residential growth is not anticipated in this area in the five year window

Long term option to Consolidate Hillcrest and Sunset Hill: Longer term options exist for considering what potential a consolidation of these two schools might provide the district and the community. A central Lawrence "themed" school could provide both diversity of programs and longer term capacity to allow west and north edge schools (Deerfield and Quail Run) to expand. A themed program could draw enrollments from across the district to a central, accessible site. The impact of moving the ESL program at Hillcrest must be considered carefully.

Woodlawn: Although Woodlawn has the second smallest capacity of any elementary school in the district as well as an ADA issue, it has had a large degree of recent capital investment, is used to a larger percentage of capacity than Wakarusa Valley, and more total students enrolled than New York. Owing to its geography as the only school north of the Kansas River, and to its award winning highly qualified instructional staff, Woodlawn has not been included in the Task Force's discussions as a realistic option for consolidation or closure.

New York: If the District were to identify problems at Kennedy that require immediate remediation, New York could be a part of the short-term solution in terms of capacity. Some subcommittees suggest evaluating whether, with renovations, New York could serve as a location for the District's Early Childhood program. The scenarios that retain New York in the long-term would mean planning for expansion of the school. New York currently has a number of high quality, day lighted classrooms that are less than 720 square feet that could be converted for the variety of academic and community support programs important to this neighborhood. New classrooms could be built to a standard of 850 sf to provide maximum flexibility.

Cordley: Cordley has significant ADA access challenges. Renovating or rebuilding Cordley as a 3 section school would allow the District to solve ADA compliance problem and possibly consolidate adjacent enrollments. Renovation of Cordley may be difficult to complete without careful staging of the project, or the possibility that the school would have to be closed altogether for a period of time to complete construction.

Utilization

As part of the evaluation of capacity at the elementary schools, the Task Force has worked with the goal that a utilization rate of approximately 90% reflects an appropriate level of efficiency for purposes of promoting long-term savings and efficiencies. The District is currently at a 76% utilization of our schools for K-5 (88% with 6th graders). See Exhibits B & C (showing current and projected utilization for 2011/2012, and utilization with projected growth to 2016/2017).

Extending these calculations out over five years, in 2016-17 our fifteen elementary schools would have a utilization rate of 79% if the District were to keep the portables at the schools that currently have them, and a utilization rate of 79% if the portables were removed and each of the elementary schools were modified/expanded to accommodate a minimum enrollment of 300 students.

Planning for Equity

Schools with a large % of small classrooms (under 720 sf)	Langston Hughes New York Pinckney Woodlawn
Schools with "open" classroom concept (minimal to no dividing walls)	Broken Arrow Deerfield
Schools with a shared gymnasium/cafeteria	Cordley Hillcrest New York Pinckney Sunset Hill

Schools with undersized music/art rooms or housed in portables	Hillcrest New York Pinckney Sunset Hill Wakarusa Valley Woodlawn
Schools with undersized libraries	Cordley

Investment in Facilities

School	Number of Classrooms Needed to Eliminate Portables and Provide for a Minimum Enrollment of 300 with Full Day Kindergarten	Significant Investments Needed
Broken Arrow	1	Daylight, Open Classrooms, Acoustics/Noise, Interior Finishes
Cordley	1	Mechanical, Plumbing, ADA
Deerfield	--	Daylight, Lighting, and Emergency Lighting, Electrical and Mechanical
Hillcrest	1	SPED Wing, Limited electrical outlets
Kennedy	1	Roof, Moisture, Indoor Air Quality, Interior Finishes. Limited electrical outlets; Electrical
Langston Hughes	---	Daylight control in library
New York	5	Minimal space for support services/programs; Limited electrical outlets
Pinckney	---	Limited electrical outlets in original building, Mechanical
Quail Run	---	Settlement issues; Mechanical
Sunflower	---	Acoustics/Noise
Sunset Hill	4	Moisture, Mechanical. Limited office/admin, Interior Finishes
Wakarusa Valley	4	Mechanical, Windows, Septic Field
Woodlawn	2	Large use of small, interior, converted storage and custodial spaces for offices/support areas; accessibility to 2 nd floor

Efficiency

	Capacities Less Than 300 Students	Projected Enrollment K-5 2011 Less Than 300 Students
Broken Arrow	N	Y
Cordley	N	Y
Kennedy	Y	Y
New York	Y	Y
Pinckney	N	Y
Sunset Hill	Y	Y
Wakarusa Valley	Y	Y
Woodlawn	Y	Y

The boundary map attached as Exhibit D shows the projected enrollments at each school for 2011-2012 and the available seats at each school (the map assumes 100% occupancy).

Preliminary cost savings information from the District indicates it could anticipate saving approximately \$400,000 to \$600,000 in operating costs for any single school building that is closed. If a scenario results in new bus routes being added, the cost for a single new bus route is approximately \$30,000.