

To: Board of Education

From: Kyle Hayden, chief operations officer, ext. 4309
Patrick Kelly, principal, college & career center, ext. 2405
Colby Wilson, director, boys & girls club

Re: Boys and Girls Club Teen Center Partnership

Date: August 10, 2017

Background

In 2015, district administrative staff began working with the Boys and Girls Club of Lawrence to pursue a vision of constructing a new Boys and Girls Club Teen Center. The new facility would be built on the property where the Lawrence College and Career Center was recently constructed as part of the 2013 Bond.

At the January 26, 2015 Board of Education meeting, the board approved a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club allowing them to specify the College and Career Center as the location for construction of a proposed Teen Center. The partnership was contingent upon the club raising the funds necessary to construct the center. The Boys and Girls Club is now in a financial position to proceed.

This board report will provide an update on the current status of the project, the proposed design, and the construction process and timeline.

Rationale

In addition to serving a critical need of school families for a safe and positive environment for before and after school childcare, the Boys and Girls Club supports the mission of our district by extending student learning, growth, and development beyond the confines of the school day.

The Boys and Girls Club supports children in reaching their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens by providing an outcomes-driven experience which helps its members achieve academic success, good character and practice healthy lifestyles. These are some of the very same goals that our district has for students. By working together, we can accomplish so much more than each of us ever could alone and better meet the needs of Lawrence children.

The district's partnership with the Boys and Girls Club has blossomed during the past 16 years from a time when the club served 150 children at one community-based site to its expanded daily outreach to 15-hundred children, or 63% of our elementary school population, within our 14 elementary schools across the community.

The challenge we now face is extending similar support to Lawrence teens. Currently, middle schoolers are bussed to the Boys and Girls Club at its current site, a space that should accommodate approximately 50 children. At the present time, the club serves approximately 75 teens. That's less than one percent of our middle and high school population.

Two and a half years ago, the Lawrence Board of Education approved the idea that the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center should be located on the Lawrence College and Career Center and Peaslee Tech Campus where learning and community resources can be shared.

The College and Career Center prepares high school students for their future through hands-on learning experiences in an innovative, engaging environment. With direct interaction with business and industry leaders, students have access to technology and curriculum that is relevant and useful. They can earn college credit while still in high school – with an opportunity for free tuition, giving students a head start on their future. All courses here prepare students for post-secondary enrollment for high-wage, high-demand careers.

District staff have been working with Boys and Girls Club staff and architects on plans to extend this facility to the south, providing additional 21st century learning space that can be used during the school day by our students and after school by teens.

The 2017 bond issue will fund renovations to modernize secondary school buildings, accommodate growth and provide students and staff 21st-century learning environments with flexible learning spaces for collaboration and project-based creativity and innovation. A portion of the 2017 bond issue funding goes towards construction of additional educational spaces and improvements for the Culinary Arts Programs at the Lawrence College and Career Center. This investment will benefit the USD 497 students during the regular school day and the Boys & Girls Club Teen Program during the afternoon/evening hours.

Through this community partnership, and construction of the Don and Beverly Gardner Center for Great Futures, USD 497 will expand educational opportunities by providing flexible, multi-use spaces, where students can collaborate, discover, create, innovate, and pursue their interests.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Education approve an agreement to lease the property adjacent to the College and Career Center located at 2910 Haskell Avenue to the Boys and Girls Club during construction of a Teen Center. Upon completion of the new building, the Boys and Girls Club will surrender the building to USD 497. In exchange, the parties will enter into a long-term lease agreement allowing the Boys and Girls Club to occupy and utilize the space for expanded teen programs. Staff will bring the recommendation for formal board approval at the September 11, 2017 board of education meeting.