



## USD 497 News Release

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### **Boundary Advisory Committee Recommends Receiving School Options**

The Lawrence Board of Education's Boundary Advisory Committee (BAC) met Wednesday following the school board's approval Tuesday of publishing a notice of public hearings for the possible closure of Broken Arrow and Pinckney Elementary Schools. BAC members discussed identifying schools to which affected students may be assigned. Kansas law requires the school district to include this information when publishing a notice of public hearings.

BAC members reached a consensus on what they considered five viable options for each school's students. They recommend the notice include that Pinckney students could be assigned to Deerfield, Sunset Hill, New York, Hillcrest, and/or Cordley. BAC recommends including for Broken Arrow students: Schwegler, Sunflower, Langston Hughes, Cordley, and Prairie Park. The committee did not discuss specific boundary changes accommodating those reassignment options.

The administration will discuss these recommendations prior to publishing the notice of public hearings in the Lawrence Journal-World, the district's newspaper of record. The notice must be published once a week for two weeks and at least 10 days, but not more than 20 days, prior to the public hearings, as required by law.

With limited time remaining in the meeting, the committee took a brief look at a draft boundary concept developed by RSP and Associates. It included elementary schools' existing boundaries, potential new boundaries, and the effect of those changes on class sizes and the racial/ethnic and low-socioeconomic makeup of all remaining elementary schools. It also showed the total number of students impacted by the boundary changes.

For example, Concept 1 expanded the boundaries of all remaining elementary schools, except Woodlawn, and affected 661 students. It resulted in seven K-3 classes of more than 25 students, which is the number used in the district's K-3 staffing ratio. Under Concept 1, one school would have 5% less ethnic diversity than its current student body. The percentage of students qualifying for free- or reduced-price lunches would decrease by more than 10% at one school and increase by more than 10% at two schools.

A second draft boundary concept was included in the committee's packet but not discussed. The BAC will meet again from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 8, at the district's Facilities and Operations Office, 711 E 23rd St. Meeting agendas and materials may be found at [www.usd497.org/Boundaries](http://www.usd497.org/Boundaries).