

Facilities Task Force Meeting Notes 11-10-14

At the November 3, 2014 Board of Education meeting, the Board voted unanimously to reaffirm a 7-8 grade configuration at a single middle school. This decision is not cost neutral, but may require renovations of \$15 to \$20 million. Administrators will work with middle school educators to develop short- and long-term plans to implement more fully the middle school philosophy that supports adolescent learners, which may result in additional operating costs of \$250,000 - \$300,000.

At the November 10, Facilities Task Force meeting, Superintendent Blane McCann shared information about the grade configuration decision. He stated that the ongoing operational cost of a 6-7-8 middle school is what held us back. He noted that the District must ensure its fund balance remains strong.

The Student Services office projected the future of our enrollment numbers. Westside has a projected seven percent internal growth over the next 10+ years.

Board Treasurer David Williams stated that the Board was appreciative of the thought put into this process. Financially, Westside needs to control its expenses. He indicated that the District is not going to shelve this idea permanently, but wait until the timing is right.

Dr. McCann stated that currently, Westside Middle School has about 166 kids per team. Ideally we'd like about 125. We will do some reconfiguring to get the middle school where we want it to be. It will take some time to figure out how we want the middle school to be designed from an educational point of view. We will look at curriculum, the elective programs, etc.

Q; Was the financial piece the main deciding factor on keeping the middle school grade configuration as is?

A: We are right at our levy authority. With all the unknowns, this was the best financial decision.

Chief Financial Officer Bob Zagozda then handed out the priority survey from the last meeting. Rob Zimmerman from Project Advocates stated that as we prepare to write a final facilities plan, we must summarize the needs school by school. How many sections per grade, critical repair items at each school, if it's in the 1st phase or the 2nd phase, etc. How much we borrow initially helps us determine what we DON'T get. Whatever scenario the District chooses, he indicated that some schools won't be renovated for several years. What safety/security measures are "must have's" right now? The District must also look at where to educate students if a school closes for construction. The District is looking at those kinds of details.

The Facilities Task Force then broke into individual teams to brainstorm.