

2/17/15 Board Meeting

Facilities Master Plan Discussion

Dr. McCann reiterated that facilities do matter for student achievement and addressed 3 topics:

1) Length of bond

Dr. McCann recommended that the District issue bonds for 20 years, due to historically low interest rates, less interest costs, and earlier retirement of the debt. This would take the payment out to 2035, when the high school may need work.

Mr. Williams said that locking in low interest rates makes sense. He estimated a \$9 million dollar savings if the board chooses a 20-year rather than a 25-year period, and \$9 million represents the cost of a whole building. Ms. Beth Morrisette, Board Director, said the question the board needs to ask is how can they be the best financial stewards of the taxpayer dollars, and that there are pros and cons to both sides. She said long term financial savings is strong, but immediate impact also needs to be considered.

The board discussed the \$94 million figure. Ms. Morrisette said the board needed to be strategic in moving forward. Ms. Blakely noted that the earlier amount was much larger, and offered kudos to the Facilities Task Force for taking a hard look at the schools and looking at the real need. What the Facilities Task Force saw (in building physical needs) was shocking – and even with that fact they cut it down to \$94 million. Ms. Slosburg noted that the District has not had a bond issue for an elementary school since 1961, and that the District had not addressed key issues of safety for 50-60 years. Dr. McCann added that schools weren't designed at that time for how learning has evolved. Mr. Hazelrigg also complemented the Task Force for doing the heavy lifting, and the Board will give its recommendations thoughtful consideration.

2) Swanson School Site and Construction

Dr. McCann recommended that the District construct a new building at the current school site. This choice will necessitate relocation of students for approximately 18 months during the construction period. The alternative was to place a new building on a different location on the grounds, which would not have necessitated relocation of student. Ms. Zweiback said that

the Board had received a lot of input from the Swanson community and that re-building at the current site was overwhelmingly the consensus. The Board received no information from the community supporting a move of the building. Ms. Blakely said the Board does not have the necessary data to compare costs between the two, and that that is a concern. Mr. Williams thanked the community for their feedback and that the Board appreciates the involvement of the community. Ms. Zweiback said that this would be discussed in more detail at the next board meeting.

3) Sequence of Projects

It is recommended that Oakdale construction be completed first, followed by Swanson and then Prairie Lane. This sequence is necessary due to the need to relocate students. If a determination were made that Swanson would be built at a different location on the grounds, that work could be completed earlier, because students would not have to be relocated.

The Board will be asked to approve the bond resolution at the March 9, 2015, meeting.