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TO: Debra Bowers
 FROM: Paul Aplikowski *PA*
 DATE: December 11, 2009
 COMM. NO: 092038

SUBJECT: Independent School District #283 Facilities Plan and Advisory Committee
 December 9, 2009 Meeting

Attendants:

Clarence Pollock, Assistant Principal SH
 Tami Reynolds, Director of Special Ed.
 John Blackburn
 Frank Johnson, Principal
 Kevin Jones, PAT
 Paul Jennings, Grandparent
 Mike Nordean, PAT
 Jason Boll, JH Assistant Principal
 Linnea Swenson Tellekson, District Office
 Freida Bailey, CM Principal
 Shelly Nielsen, Aquila Principal
 Chris Holden, PSI Parent
 Amy Burns, Parent
 Andra Roethler, Parent
 Gerry Lee Lukaska, PSI Principal
 Les Bork, JH Principal
 Marty Stillman, Parent
 Michelle Bryant, PH/PAT
 Linda Ell-Egemeier, CM Parent
 Rob Metz, SH
 Scott McQueen, Wold Architects and Engineers
 Paul Aplikowski, Wold Architects and Engineers

Absentees:

Ken Huiras, Senior Citizen
 Linda Saveraid, Community Education Director
 Corey Maslowski, SL Pricipal
 Lynae Schoen, Wold Architects and Engineers

Discussion Topics:

- A. Dr. Bowers introduced the meeting.
 1. Goal is to prepare group's work for presentation December 14th Board Meeting.
- B. Feedback from last meeting.
 1. A member suggested that four choices of elementary to retain or sell, the District would have options to sell buildings and retain land based on market conditions. This lends some credence to the K-8 option.
 2. Based on the idea that St. Louis Park is a high achievement District, development of athletics could be part of it. A member suggested that athletics could be enhanced with pools at both K-8's, this would allow development of feeder programs for swimming, Wrestling and other programs could be developed as well.



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3. A member suggested that value of property should be a lesser criteria, and Ed benefits and balancing size of school, and operating saving should be primary.
 4. A member noted that many of the same issues were surfaced in the 2001 facility study, history repeats itself.
 5. A member inquired about the Pre-K options. Those options appear to be "off the table" and the question: Is starting early with children important? Should these options still be considered?
 6. Wold presented a data sheet on another option with a K-7/8-12 grade configuration.
 7. A member indicated that social development has significant "payback" if targeted 3 and 4 year olds are captured in programs.
 8. Dr. Bowers indicated that discussions on PSI enrollment policy changes have been occurring with the Board and the principals. There is wide support for amending the policy to include more diversity in PSI.
 9. Based on the committee's recommendation, Dr. Bowers will be presenting on December 14th the formation of a committee to study options for PSI enrollment policy including the possibility of dual immersion that would include native Spanish speakers.
 10. A handout was distributed indicating a three month look ahead schedule.
- C. The group divided into subcommittees for discussion.
- D. Report to large group.
1. The equity group indicated 3 top options:
 - a. The K-7/K-8 options do more for equity than K-5 and K-6 options.
 - b. The top 2 options were 6th Grade Up and Jr. High Addition.
 2. The Ed Benefit
 - a. K-7 does not appear to provide a benefit educationally over other options.
 - b. Early Childhood for 4 year olds is important
 - c. Group had slighting leaning to K-5 option.
 3. Cost Benefit
 - a. Support change in PSI enrollment policy as discussed earlier.
 - b. Top options in order:
 - #1 is still 6th Grade Up
 - #2 K-7 or K-8, similar from a cost standpoint.
 - #3 Disperse PSI.
 4. A member asked the equity group for a position on disperse PSI? A: It would decrease diversity, but would likely introduce "conflict" into those buildings by having competing programs.
 5. The Ed. Benefits Group indicated that research indicates that 8th graders achieve more with younger kids.
 6. Pros and Cons Discussion
 - a. Option: "6th Grade Up"
 - 1) Pros
 - Better demographics than existing
 - Combining one grade earlier
 - 4/5 together at critical point
 - Group more developmentally appropriate
 - More like grades together
 - Better fit for IB
 - Staff doing sim. curriculum



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- Smaller buildings
- Maintain exploratory classes at M.S.
- Research supports teacher satisfaction/less training
- Align better with other Districts
- Eliminates 2 grade building
- Less disruptive to current programs
- Faster implementation
- Good staffing efficiency
- Fewer student transitions
- Lower capital investment
- Closer to more efficient capacity, but still room to breath
- Gives the option of disposing of 3 buildings
- May offer more sports opportunities at Jr. High

2) Cons

- Potential loss of 1 year of immersion
- 6th grade curriculum (run as self-contained)
- Doesn't address extra high school space
- 3 boundaries not as equitable as 2 boundaries
- May not save enough money, may re-open discussion in a few years (this issue was discussed in all three groups)

b. K-7/K-8 options

1) Pros

- Fewer transitions
- Two boundaries could be best for equity
- Longer student teacher relationships
- K-7 allows for 4 year old or all day K at elementaries
- Offers vertical alignment for enrichment
- Mentoring older with younger
- A K-8 immersion program would be first in area. May draw in outside kids
- Greatest divestment of buildings
- 8-12 takes care of part of H.S. space problem
- Would be efficient for specialists
- K-8 immersion opportunity?
- Finding appropriate licensed teachers would be relatively easy
- Efficient for Special Ed.

2) Cons

- A lot of capital investment
- Large schools, District is used to small sports, etc. (discussed by all three groups)
- Some increased administrative costs for large schools
- K-8 doesn't address high school much
- PSI may have a capital investment to add grades/capacity
- PSI transportation cost would go up (more grades)
- Struggling students may get lost in large schools
- Biggest change/most risks
- Reduces critical mass at middle level, less options for programs
- Big age spread together (K vs. 8th on bus)
- Licensure of teachers different at EL/Mid



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- Lack of support from teachers organization (informal poll)
- Size can be intimidating to parents
- c. Disperse PSI
 - 1) Group opted not to comment on this option; it is not favored by two groups.
- d. Jr. High 5-7 (no addition)
 - 1) Pros
 - 2 K-4's (2 boundaries) helps with equity
 - Keeps schools smaller (+/- 540 at elem)
 - Uses H.S. space
 - Uses Jr. High space
 - Room for Pre-K, all day K
 - Keeps # of grades in building about same
 - May help with idea that "9th grade counts"
 - More opportunities for 8th grade
 - Closes more buildings. Could have significant savings over time.
 - Efficient in terms of space
 - 2) Cons
 - Dramatically altered immersion program. May loose students out of District.
 - 5-7 Jr. High may be difficult to program. Not enough critical mass. Would have lots of traveling teachers.
 - 5th and 8th would be better fit with younger rather than older kids.
 - Not aligned with other Districts
 - More transitions than other options
- e. Each of the subcommittees was asked to have representation at the December 14th Board Meeting. Chairs will be asked to speak on the options.
- f. Straw Poll

	Votes
1) 6 th Grade Up:	7
2) K-7/K-8:	5
3) Jr. High 5-7:	3
4) Undecided:	4 (Plus absentees)
- g. The website will be maintained through the next phase of the process. People are encouraged to use the venue to comment. Those comments will go to the Board for this consideration.
- h. A member clarified that "6th Grade Up" would easily be their #1 choice unless more cuts are coming, then K-8 would be more attractive now. Does "6th Grade Up" cut enough?
- i. A member suggested that we need to get involved politically at the State (to address school funding).
- j. All three groups suggested that the Board examine changing the PSI enrollment policy to address the diversity issues within the program.

cc: Attendants
Absentees

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