

USD #377

Long Range Planning Fact Sheet

Planning for the Future

Because of the current state-wide budget crisis & the potential for deep cuts in state aid next year, the Board has directed the district administrators to study and explore cost cutting measures that accomplish the following objectives:

1. Provides all students with equitable access to academic programs.
2. Efficiently utilizes resources
3. Promotes excellence
4. Maintains a commitment to safety and security

In addition, the board will strive to reduce staff through attrition and to protect academics.

Grade Level Reconfiguration Plan

One of the options to be studied, per Board directive, is to determine the viability of reassigning students at Lancaster and Cummings elementary schools to school buildings located in Effingham.

How far along are we?

After analyzing district enrollment patterns and researching grade level assignment best practice, the district administrative team developed a grade level reconfiguration plan that would reorganize grade levels as follows:

- Effingham elementary would become a K-1 primary school
- The middle school would become an intermediate elementary center for students in grades 2-6
- The high school would become a secondary school for students in grades 7-12

The district administrative team studied several reconfiguration options and has concluded that the above plan is the most viable option that would provide students with a quality educational experience and be a significant cost savings to the district.

Next Phase – Communication & Feedback

More specific details of the plan will be presented at the January 12th meeting of the Board and at informational meetings as outlined in the Phase II timeline.

The intent of the communication plan is to: a) inform students, staff and parents of the details of the plan, b) provide a forum for staff and parents to ask questions and offer comments about the plan, and c) conduct a perception survey of the students, staff and parents.

Reporting Feedback

After meeting with students, staff and parents, the administrative team will present to the Board a summary of all comments, questions and concerns gathered at the informational meetings and to provide information from perception surveys.

That information will also be made available to students, staff and parents via the district website.

Decision-Making Phase

Upon review of the plan and information gathered from students, staff and parents, the Board will then determine if they would like to pursue this option or look to other cost savings strategies in preparation for the upcoming budget year.

Statutory Obligation For A Board To Close A School

K.S.A. 72-8213b requires boards to:

- Call and hold a hearing prior to adopting a resolution to close any school building

Publish notice of hearing

- Such notice shall include the reasons for the proposed closing, the name of any affected building and the name of any school building to which the involved pupils shall be reassigned.
- Such notice also shall include the time, date and place of the public hearing to be held on the proposal.
- Such notice shall be published at least once each week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the school district.
- The last publication shall be at least 10 but not more than 20 days prior to the date of the public hearing.

Hearing

- At such hearing, the board shall hear testimony as to the advisability of the proposed closing,
- A representative of the board shall present the board's proposal for such closing.

Action by the Board following Hearing

- Following the public hearing, or any continuation of such hearing, and after considering all of the testimony and evidence presented or submitted at the public hearing, the board shall determine whether the school building(s) should be closed to improve the school system of the unified school district.